

IS HELL EVERLASTING FIRE?

Message 4

Words: 6107

INTRO: We are considering David Raegan's problems with the traditional view of hell, which is that it lasts forever. Let me say again, I find no evidence that the self, any person can ever come to an end once they are conceived.

We have looked at four objections to the traditional view. The first is how could a God of grace and mercy and love put someone in hell forever? But God is not only gracious, merciful and loving; He is also holy and just and righteous. Raegan's second problem was with regard to biblical examples. When God had man destroy man, it was quickly, not with long torment. This is even true of animals. That is because God said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." God will do justice and when He does it, it will be done 100% right.

The third problem was that of the second death, and we have seen most clearly that death does not mean an end of conscious, sensuous existence. It basically means separation. The rich man died and all his senses were working well after his body was gone. At the time of the second death, the person has been resurrected and is now separated from God forever. This I see as the second death. It does not mean the end of conscious, sensuous existence either.

His fourth problem was the term 'destruction'. He takes that to mean the same as annihilation, but it does not mean that at all. I believe it means to no longer be useful for that for which something is made. And now we want to consider the last 3 objections and a few more points. So we go to objection 5.

5. Problem Regarding Punishment

This brings us to Raegan's fifth point. He says:

Fifth, there is a difference between eternal punishment and eternal punishing. It is one thing to experience a punishment that is eternal in its consequences; it is another thing to experience eternal punishing.

The Bible also speaks of eternal judgment ([Hebrews 6:2](#)). Is that a judgment that continues eternally, or is it a judgment with eternal consequences? Likewise, the

Bible speaks of eternal redemption ([Hebrews 9:12](#)). But this does not mean that Christ will continue the act of redemption eternally. That act took place at the Cross, once and for all. It was an eternal redemption because the result of the redemption had eternal consequences.

Raegan says that Hebrews 6:2 speaks of eternal judgment, yet surely this judgment does not go on forever. Here is what Hebrews 6:1-2 says:

1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

It is reasonable to say that this judgment does not go on and on forever. It is also reasonable to say the consequences are forever. So those who are judged and enter life, have life forever and those who go to hell experience hell forever. The idea is nowhere that the lost are judged and then they cease to exist.

Now the word translated 'eternal' in the phrase 'eternal judgment' is *aiwnios*. An *aiwn* is an age. When it speaks of the age to come it may have the idea of forever. I have spoken to you of this word many times. It is used as an adjective here and we do not have such an adjective, so I will make one. It is *ageous* judgment. I think what is intended here is that it is the judgment regarding the age to come. At this judgment it will be decided who enters the age to come and who does not, so it is the *ageous* judgment, or the judgment regarding the age to come. The righteous do not cease to exist after this judgment. There is no reason then to think the unrighteous do.

He also mentions Hebrews 9:12. He says: Likewise, the Bible speaks of eternal redemption ([Hebrews 9:12](#)). But this does not mean that Christ will continue the act of redemption eternally.

Hebrews 9:12 says:

12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Again, Hebrews 9:12 which speaks of eternal redemption uses the same word and would be ageous redemption. So it is redemption with regard to the age to come. I don't think this is any support to the conditional position.

So consider now in that light John 3:16 which speaks of eternal life. It is the same word and could be translated 'ageous life'. It is the life of the age to come which lasts forever. Now here the word describes that which is ongoing without end. The ongoing consequences are ongoing life. It is a life that will never end.

So what then does this word translated 'eternal' mean when it comes to hell? Take Matthew 25:41. When the unsaved are judged at the end of the tribulation this is what will be said to them:

41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

Now this is ageous, or aionios fire. So does the fire burn once and it is over? We go to verse 46. It says:

46 "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

So we ask, is it punishment that happens once, and then it is over? So it says the righteous will go into aionios life. Does this life happen once, and then it is over?

Go to Mark 9. Here Jesus described hell from a verse in the OT. We begin in verse 41:

41 "For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

42 *"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.*

43 *"If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—*

44 *"where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'*

45 *"And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—*

46 *"where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'*

47 *"And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—*

48 *"where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'*

How does Jesus describe hell here? It is a place where the worm does not die. Who has heard of such a thing? Let me ask, where did Jesus get this from? Well, he got it from the very last verse in the book of Isaiah. Turn to Isaiah 66.

Now it is interesting that the book of Isaiah falls into two sections, just like the Bible has two sections; the OT and the NT. It is further interesting that Isaiah has 66 chapters and the Bible has 66 books. It is still further interesting that the first section of Isaiah is chapters 1-39, just like the OT has 39 books. And the second section has 27 chapters just like the NT has 27 books.

I am not very familiar with the book of Isaiah. One thing that saddens me is that I will have studied so little of the Bible before my time is up. What encourages me is that I believe that is what we will do in heaven for all eternity.

But it is now further interesting that as the book of Revelation comes close to the end, all nations are gathered together and God destroys them and He delivers Israel in a moment of time that is what Isaiah's last chapter is about. And as the last chapters in Revelation speak of the new heavens and the new earth, so does Isaiah 66. And as Revelation closes with a warning to the unrighteous, so does Isaiah 66. So we go to verse 22 in Isaiah 66:

22 "For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain.

23 And it shall come to pass That from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the LORD.

24 "And they shall go forth and look Upon the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, And their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."

This last verse of Isaiah is the one Jesus quoted from three times in Mark 9. Let me quote here from some earlier messages I did on hell:

When Jesus Christ, the creator of the universe, came on the scene in human form and began His ministry He gave His first recorded major discourse in Matthew 5-7. It is called the sermon on the Mount. Let us turn there and read together Matthew 5:21-22, and 27-30 (read). In these passages we have hell mentioned three times and once as hell fire. In all the Bible, the strongest proof for the existence of hell is the teaching of Jesus Christ, and there is no higher authority. Furthermore, the word for hell in these passages is not hades, the translation of the word sheol. It is

the word Gehenna. Some explanation is necessary for an understanding of this word as used in the NT.

In the days of the wicked king Ahaz, who began to reign just before the captivity of Samaria, he began a practice of offering children as a sacrifice to the fire gods. We find the early history of this in 2 Chronicles 28:1-3 (read). 2 Kings 16:3 says he offered one of his own sons like this. Now the place where this was done was in the valley of the son of Hinnom.

When the godly king Josiah took the throne, he defiled this place so that these very ungodly sacrifices would cease. 2 Kings 23:10 says, "And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or daughter pass through the fire to Molech." Adam Clark writes, "St. Jerome says that Topheth was a fine and pleasant place, well watered with fountains, and adorned with gardens."

Now the name 'Tophet' comes from the word 'toph' likely meaning drum. Of this name, John Gill writes, "A place so called, as is generally thought, from the beating of drums or timbrels in it, that the shrieks of the infants sacrificed here to Molech might not be heard by their parents, and they repent of delivering them to him, and take them away. So the Indians in India now, at the burning of wives with their deceased husbands, attend them with drums and trumpets; and at such time as the fire is put to the wood, the drums and trumpets make a terrible noise for fear their cries should be heard..."

And how did king Josiah defile this place? He turned this beautiful place of water and gardens into a garbage dump, where the fire would now be used to burn garbage, not babies. This made the valley of the son of Hinnom a most undesirable place, and the sacrifices ceased. From that time onward, the valley of the son of Hinnom, known as gay Hinnom, meaning valley of Hinnom, became more and more referred to as that which was formerly referred to as sheol, or hell where the

wicked go at death. In other words, it became known as that place we call hell.

So common was the expression of gehenna for hell, that when Jesus came on the scene He never refers to hell as hades, but as gehenna. William Shedd in his classic on hell says, "'Gehenna,' at the time of the Advent, had become a technical term for endless torment..." And so common was the understanding of this meaning that He needs make no explanation as to what He is talking about. The Creator of heaven and earth, the Lord Jesus, the One who also made hell, mentions this place three times in the first major discourse in the verses we just read. In verse 22, Jesus says that someone who calls his brother 'Raca', meaning something like 'you empty head' is in danger of hell fire. This is gehenna fire, the fire of the valley of Hinnom.

Let us now go to Mark 9 (read 42-48). The Lord Jesus here quotes from Isaiah 66:24. Nowhere will you get a stronger message on hell than this, and that by the One who made hell! In verse 43, going into life is contrasted with going into hell. Those are the two alternatives. We would not argue that 'the going into life' is but for a very short time, neither can we argue that the going into hell is only until one is burned up, as the annihilationists would have us believe. As a matter of fact, here is a reference to gehenna, not hades. No doubt, the picture drawn here is from the garbage dump at the valley of Hinnom where the worm continuously ate and the fire burned continually, to that everlasting place that burns endlessly which we call hell.

Twice Jesus refers to hell here as the fire that is not quenched, and three times He repeats these words, "where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched." Certainly the most powerful message ever preached on hell in all the Bible is by the One who created all things, the One who became the living Word of God.

So is eternal life something that happens once and then the consequences is that it is no more? If not, how is eternal punishment only once, for however long it is deserved and then it is no more? Can you have it one way with eternal life and another with eternal fire? Beyond that, I find no indication anywhere in the Bible that a person can ever cease to exist, and after death there are only two places named in the Bible.

6. Problem Of The Number 666

Raegan's sixth point is the problem of taking the number 666 and he gives it like this:

Sixth, I noted earlier that traditionalists often cite [Revelation 14:9-11](#) to demonstrate that the suffering of the wicked will be eternal. They most often highlight two phrases. The first refers to those who take the mark of the beast during the Tribulation, who will be "*tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels.*" The second is that "*the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever.*" Notice that this passage does not speak of eternal torment. Rather, it speaks of "*the smoke of their torment*" ascending forever.

The Bible is its own best interpreter, and when you look up statements similar to this you will find that they are symbolic for a punishment that has eternal consequences, not a punishment that continues eternally. For example, consider [Isaiah 34:10](#) which speaks of the destruction of Edom. It says the smoke of Edom's destruction will "*go up forever.*"

I have been to Edom (the southern portion of modern day Jordan in the area around Petra). I have seen its destruction. But there was no smoke ascending to heaven. The reference to eternal smoke is obviously symbolic, indicating that Edom's destruction will give eternal testimony to how God deals with a sinful society.

The same is true of [Jude 7](#) when it says that Sodom and Gomorrah experienced "*the punishment of eternal fire.*" Again, I have been to the area at the southern tip of the Dead Sea where these twin cities existed. The area is one of utter devastation, but there is no smoke going up to heaven. They are not burning eternally. They simply suffered a fiery destruction that had eternal consequences.

Turn to Revelation 14. I'll take these paragraphs one at a time. The first was regarding Revelation 14:9-11 which reads like this:

Revelation 14:9-11 says:

9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

10 "he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. 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 ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Raegan's point here simply is that the passage does not speak of eternal torment, but the smoke of their torment ascending forever. It hardly seems worth spending much time here. What he is saying is the smoke ascends forever, but since they have been burned up the torment has long ceased. If the torment ended, why does the smoke keep going? This smoke stands for their torment.

Raegan mentioned earlier that everlasting punishment did not seem gracious or merciful or loving. Note in verse 10 that torment is not related to grace or mercy or love. It is related to wrath. The wrath proceeds from justice, not love. Notice one more thing and that is the smoke ascending forever. What is the word for 'forever' here? It is *eis twn aiwniwn twn aiwniwn*. It is the strongest phrase for time without end. It is into the ages of the ages. It means it will never, ever end.

Paragraphs two and three say:

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consider [Isaiah 34:10](#) which speaks of the destruction of Edom. It says the smoke of Edom's destruction will *"go up forever."*

I have been to Edom (the southern portion of modern day Jordan in the area around Petra). I have seen its destruction. But there was no smoke ascending to heaven. The reference to eternal smoke is obviously symbolic, indicating that Edom's destruction will give eternal testimony to how God deals with a sinful society.

I am not well versed in many of the prophecies of the book of Isaiah. But I think this argument is best answered in the next paragraph where he writes:

The same is true of [Jude 7](#) when it says that Sodom and Gomorrah experienced *"the punishment of eternal fire."* Again, I have been to the area at the southern tip of the Dead Sea where these twin cities existed. The area is one of utter devastation, but there is no smoke going up to heaven. They are not burning eternally. They simply suffered a fiery destruction that had eternal consequences.

Turn to the book of Jude. We begin in verse 3:

3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

5 But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

It seems those Jude was writing to were in danger of turning from the faith. Some men had crept in unnoticed and were turning the grace of God into lewdness. So Jude reminds them that God once delivered Israel out of Egypt but afterward He destroyed (apollumi) those who failed to continue to believe.

Now in verse 6 he will remind them of the same from the example of certain angels. He says further:

6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

We then come to verse 7, the passage Raegan spoke of. It says:

7 as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Raegan's point is that these cities suffered eternal fire, but they are not still burning, however the consequences of the fire are still there. The cities no longer exist. In the same way, those that go to hell suffer eternal fire, but the people no longer exist.

In light of what the rest of Scripture teaches I think another interpretation must be found. Let me reread the first part of this verse: *...as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh..*

Note first that the word translated fornication in the KJV and sexual immorality in the NKJV is not the regular word translated in those ways in those versions. It is not *pornea*, but *ekporneuo*. This word only occurs once in the NT. According to Vine's dictionary it is excessive immorality. It is the kind of immorality America is now accepting as normal. Now note carefully that cities do not commit such sins. So the cities are put for the people by metonymy. It is the people that commit such sins.

And I think it is safe to say that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by the hot molten rock that spewed out of the ground and rained upon those cities, speaks figuratively of the experience of the people of these

cities in hell. No, the cities are not burning today, but the people are. I think this interpretation holds true for Edom in the earlier reference as well. So, because those cities are not burning today does not mean that hell is not ongoing.

7. Problem Of Immortality

We come then to Raegan's seventh point. He writes:

Seventh, many traditionalists believe that the soul is immortal. But is it? I believe the Bible denies the immortality of the soul point blank.

In 1 Timothy 6:15-16 Paul says that God alone possesses immortality. And 1 Corinthians 15:53 teaches that the Redeemed will not become immortal until the time of their resurrection.

In other words, immortality is a gift of God which He gives in His grace to the Redeemed at the time of their resurrection. There is no need to believe in an eternal Hell if the soul is not intrinsically immortal. And it isn't.

So just what is immortality? Immortality means it cannot die, or will never die. And the point is with regard to the soul, and the question is can the soul die? I would say I tend to agree with Raegan that the soul can die. Raegan is right in referring to 1 Timothy 6:15-16 to show that only God has immortality. I'll read verses 13-16. Paul says to Timothy:

13 I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,

14 that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,

15 which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

God alone has immortality. That means all animated beings and all personal beings, are subject to death. God alone has immortality. That means angels do not have immortality. That means angels can die. It is argued by theologians that the soul is immortal.

For Example Strong's Systematic Theology says, "The soul is simple, not compounded. Death, in matter, is the separation of parts. But in the soul there are no parts to be separated. The dissolution of the body, therefore, does not necessarily work the dissolution of the soul" (984). Henry C. Thiessen says, "While Scripture declares that God alone has immortality (1 Tim. 6:16; cf. 1:17), man is immortal in th sense that his soul never dies" (338).

This is one area where I differ with theologians who hold to a literal view of hell. I think the problem is that when we think of death we think of it as the end of existence. We have seen already that man can die spiritually but he still exists. He can die physically, but he still exists. His soul can die, that is be separated from God and go to hell, and still it exists.

Ezekiel said, "The soul that sins shall die" (18:4, 20). Now some might argue that the soul in this passage simply refers to the person. However Jesus said in Matthew 10:28, "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul." Notice that it is possible to kill the soul. The word for 'kill' is the regular word meaning to kill, *apokteinw*. That means it dies.

What is the death of the soul? We have already seen that death is basically separation. Man can die physically but he is still conscious and has the senses. We see that in the rich man and Lazars. Man can die spiritually but be fully conscious and have the senses physically. This death separation is between God and man. In the same way I think the death of the soul has nothing to do with an end of conscious and sensuous existence. It has to do with being eternally separated from God. In spiritual death, there was hope for salvation. There

was a remedy that could be applied. But when the soul dies, I believe it means to be separated from God without remedy of salvation forever. It is eternal death. So there is physical death, spiritual death, and soulical death otherwise known as eternal death.

And I believe this death is the second death. This takes place after the body is resurrected, the person is judged and body, soul and spirit are cast into hell. This is eternal death. It is the second death. It is not the end of conscious existence. It is conscious existence in hell. The souls of the lost who die are dead. They are separated from God without remedy.

So yes, only God has immortality. However, Raegan is right again when he says this: *And 1 Corinthians 15:53 teaches that the Redeemed will not become immortal until the time of their resurrection.* Now what becomes immortal at the resurrection? Well, 1 Corinthians 15 is the resurrection chapter of the Bible. The bodies of the saved will be resurrected and their bodies will from there on forever afterward be immortal. These people have a resurrected body. If the body is immortal, this person will not be able to die in any other way either. This is eternal life.

Raegan's conclusion? He says: **There is no need to believe in an eternal Hell if the soul is not intrinsically immortal. And it isn't.**

It is natural if one thinks that death means the end of existence for something, then if the soul can die it also ceases to exist. But spiritual death for man does not mean the person is not conscious and without the senses, and nor does soulical death. Most people today are physically alive but spiritually dead but they still have the same five senses. Those who die physically, still have the senses after death. The rich man died and went to hell, but he had the senses still. He had experienced the death of the soul, but his senses were as active as ever. The soul of those who go to hell is dead, not alive. But the senses are

all fully operative in hell as we see in the rich man in Luke 16.

CONCL: So in conclusion, let me briefly summarize the section on Raegan's problems with the traditional view of hell. He said, "My first difficulty with the traditional view is that it seems to impugn the character of God. I kept asking myself, "How could a God of grace, mercy and love torment the vast majority of humanity eternally?" It did not seem to me to be either loving or just. I realize He is a God of righteousness, holiness and justice, but is eternal suffering justice? The concept of eternal torment seems to convert the true God of justice into a cosmic sadist."

I think the subject of hell is not related to God's love, mercy and grace. It is related to His justice. He has forbidden man to take vengeance because He has said, "Vengeance is mine saith the Lord." Furthermore, I do not find anywhere in the Bible that a personal being can ever come to an end. Once a person is conceived he or she will exist somewhere forever. God never made hell for man. He made hell for the devil and his angels. But man who sells himself to the devil through sin ends up where the devil ends up.

Raegan was further troubled that how could God make sure that death happened suddenly and quickly when man died on earth, how would he then punish him forever afterward. But the demons recognize the torment that is coming. Originally I had planned to deal with his questions and answers at the end of his article. I won't do that now but let me give you one of those.

The question he answers here is question 4. Let me read you the question and the answer:

4) What about the Antichrist and the False Prophet? Doesn't the Bible say they will be subjected to eternal torment? ([Revelation 19:20](#) and [20:10](#)).

Yes, [Revelation 20:10](#) states that the Antichrist and his False Prophet will "*be tormented forever and ever,*" together with Satan. But this certainly is no indication that the rest of humanity will suffer eternal torment.

The Antichrist and False Prophet are two special cases. Keep in mind that they will be responsible for the deaths of one-half of humanity during the first three-and-a-half years of the Tribulation. That's a total of 3 billion people in today's terms. They are also going to kill

two-thirds of the Jews during the second half of the Tribulation. By the end of the seven years of the Tribulation, it is likely that they will have the blood of two-thirds of humanity on their hands — or 4 billion people. All the carnage of all the nefarious leaders of history — like Hitler, Stalin, and Mao — pales in comparison.

But it may well be that [Revelation 20:10](#) is not speaking of the human beings who will serve as the Antichrist and False Prophet. It may instead be speaking of the demonic spirits that possess them. Note that the passage refers to "*the beast and the false prophet.*" We are told in [Revelation 11:7](#) that the beast "*comes up out of the abyss.*" According to the Scriptures, this is the pit where evil spirits are imprisoned, not human beings. Likewise, the False Prophet is referred to as "*another beast*" ([Revelation 13:11](#)), meaning another of the same kind.

I think if one admits the Antichrist and the false prophet will be tormented forever, it settles the whole question.

His third problem was the second death. Here is what he said:

As a student of God's Prophetic Word, I found a third problem with the traditional view. It seems to contradict a descriptive phrase that is used in prophecy to describe Hell. That term is "the second death." It is a term peculiar to the book of Revelation ([Revelation 2:11](#); [20:6, 14](#); [21:8](#)). How can Hell be a "second death" if it consists of eternal, conscious torment?

There are three deaths described in the Bible. There is physical death with which we are very familiar. Then there is spiritual death, which is the separation between man and God. And last there is eternal death, the death that has no remedy. I believe it is this death that is the second death. It is to be separated from God forever.

His fourth problem was with the term destruction. Jesus said in Matthew 10:28: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." I showed how destruction does not mean annihilation. I would describe it as being rendered useless for that for which it was created.

His fifth problem was the number 666. He said that Revelation 14:9-11 says of those who take the mark of the beast that the smoke of their torment rises forever. Then he shows that it says the smoke of Edom's destruction will go up forever and he has been there and it is not still going up. Again, he says of Sodom and Gomorrah experienced eternal punishment, but that is not happening today.

Jude verses 6-7 says:

6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

7 as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

I pointed out that it was not the cities that gave themselves over to immorality, it was the people of the cities. And as the cities speak by metonymy of these sins so their destruction speaks by metonymy of the destruction of the people which elsewhere is described as being in an everlasting hell.

Last, he mentioned the problem of immortality. Only God has immortality. Since only God has immortality, the soul does not have immortality as most traditionalists believe. He says:

In other words, immortality is a gift of God which He gives in His grace to the Redeemed at the time of their resurrection. There is no need to believe in an eternal Hell if the soul is not intrinsically immortal. And it isn't.

I see this as an error of seeing death as an end of existence. But death does not mean that. It means separation. A living person is considered dead in trespasses and sins as long as he or she is unsaved. That is spiritual death. But it does not mean an end of existence. Physical death does not put an end to consciousness and the senses. Spiritual death does not put an end to consciousness and the senses, and nor does eternal death, or the second death.

I do not expect that you understood all of this. If you should ever come to question this doctrine, you will have access to these notes and messages and then certain points may take on new meaning. Beyond that, in these messages we have been reminded of a truth we tend to not to want to look at but which we need to be reminded of. And last, if these things are true, and how can they be doubted, what manner of people ought we to be?