



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## *The Herald of His Grace*

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume IX  
Issue 211

# *Total Victory over Sin!*

## Part 2

by – Bill Petri

### WORDS TRANSLATED AS HELL IN THE BIBLE

In the Old Testament, the word “*Hell*” is always a translation of the Hebrew word *Sheol*, which occurs 64 times, and in the *King James Version* is rendered “*hell*” 32 times, “*grave*” 29 times, and “*pit*” 3 times. The primary meaning is, *the place or the state of the dead* (see Genesis 37:35; Job 14:13; Psalm 6:5; 139:8).

There is no teaching in the Old Testament that *Sheol* is a place where people will be tortured forever and ever. In fact, *all people* go to *Sheol* according to the Hebrew Scriptures, because *Sheol* simply means the grave or the place of the dead.

The New Testament is more complicated on this issue. There are three Greek words translated “*Hell*” in the New Testament: *Hades* and *Tartarus*, and *Gehenna*, which is the Greek form of the Hebrew words *Gay* and *Hinnôm*, meaning *the valley of Hinnom*. It is also interesting to note that **no** reference to hell in Scripture ever refers to a Gentile.

**Hades** occurs eleven times and is rendered “*grave*” once, and “*hell*” ten times. The primary meaning of *Hades* is, *grave or state of the dead*, like the word *Sheol*. *Hades* is also used in a figurative sense to represent a state of degradation, calamity or suffering. *Hades* is a name of a Greek mythological god of the underworld.

Vines Dictionary states:

The word [*Hades*] is used four times in the Gospels, and always by the Lord (Matthew 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23); it is used with reference to Christ (Acts 2:27, 31); Christ declares that He has the keys of it (Revelation 1:18); in (Revelation 6:8) it is personified, with the signification of the *temporary* destiny of the doomed; it is to give up those who are therein (Revelation 20:13), and is to be cast into the lake of fire (:14).

*All* of the above references have *no reference to time duration*. **All** in *Hades* will be judged: even the Devil and his angels will eventually be brought to a right standing with God.

Also note:

*And the sea gave up the dead, who were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead, who were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works* (Revelation 20:13).

Strong's definition of the Greek word translated “*every*”:

G1538 *hekastos* (hek'-as-tos); as if a superlative of *hekas* (afar); each or **every**: *KJV* – any, both, each (one), every (man, one, woman), particularly.

So **every** person or **all** will be judged at that time. Still, no time duration is noted in the context. ►

Tartarus occurs only once in the Bible (II Peter 2:4). Again, *no time duration* is noted. In Greek mythology Tartarus is the lowest region of the underworld. According to Hesiod and Virgil Tartarus is as far below Hades as the earth is below the heavens, and is closed in by iron gates. In some accounts Zeus, the father of the gods, after leading the gods to victory over the Titans, banished them to Tartarus.

The name Tartarus was later employed sometimes as a synonym for Hades, or the underworld in general, but more frequently for the place of damnation where the wicked were punished after death. Such legendary sinners as Ixion, king of the Lapiths, Sisyphus, king of Corinth, and Tantalus, a mortal son of Zeus, were placed in Tartarus. It is also important to note that no person is ever referred to as being in Tartarus in the Scriptures, only spirit beings are here.

**Gehenna** (Greek *Geenna* (gheh'-en-nah); Hebrew *Gay Hinnôm*, see Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6) – the Valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, so called because some of the Israelites sacrificed their children to Moloch there (see II Kings 23:10), the valley came to be regarded as a place of abomination. In a later period it was *made a refuse dump, and perpetual fires were maintained there to prevent pestilence*. Thus, in the New Testament, *Gehenna* became synonymous with hell. Today it is a nice green park in Israel.

Again, there is *no time duration referenced* in any of these verses. Nor is *Gehenna* necessarily to be understood as a place of torture. It indicates destruction, degradation and shame. It is symbolic of divine judgment. To the Hebrews the Valley of Hinnom was a terrible, abominable place for one's body to be placed at death. It was regarded as shameful for family members to have a loved one dumped there. It was bad for the family name, reputation and social status. Criminals were often tossed in naked and were urinated on.

This place was the literal garbage dump for Jerusalem. It is used figuratively in reference to Hell fire, or the punishment of God, in which

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
  - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
  - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
  - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

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evil things are burned up. If a person is dead, how do they feel flames burning? Can a spirit burn? This idea of perpetual burning makes no sense, spiritually, when these verses are referring to a literal physical place. A more reasonable interpretation of *Gehenna* in regard to Hell is that it represents divine judgment against sin, the method of destroying sins and cleansing the sinner who incurs shame and suffering in the process.

### What About Unquenchable Fire?

*And if your hand offends you, cut it off: it is better for you to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the **fire that never shall be quenched**: where their worm dies not, and the **fire is not quenched**. And if your foot offends you, cut it off: it is better for you to enter into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that **never shall be quenched**: where their worm dies not, and the fire **is not quenched**. And if your eye offends you, pluck it out: it is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dies not, and the fire **is not quenched** (Mark 9:43-48).*

Here is Strong's definition of the Greek word translated "not quenched":

G762 *asbestos* (as'-bes-tos); from G1 (as a negative particle) and a derivative of G4570; not extinguished, *i.e.*, (by implication) perpetual: *KJV* – **not to be quenched, unquenchable**.

At first glance it may seem that "fire ... not quenched" would mean forever; but does it? This same word *asbestos* is used in two other places in Scripture:

*Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff **with unquenchable fire** (Matthew 3:12).*

Luke 3:17 [basically the same as above]

What happens to wood or paper when they are placed in fire and it is not quenched? They burn up. If the fire is not extinguished, **all** fuel ("chaff") **will be consumed**. These verses show that the purifying fire is unquenchable; **it does not**, again, **show duration of time**. The point of calling a fire unquenchable is not to say that it will never stop burning something, but to say that it will continue burning until all that can burn is burned up. What cannot burn will remain, passing through the fire unharmed, *no matter how long it burns*.

Remember, the fire we are talking about is the all-consuming fire, the presence of God Himself (Deuteronomy 4:24; Hebrews 12:9; Revelation 14:10). God is indeed fire, but only that which is evil will be destroyed by God. Also note that the same word for fire is used in another passage:

*That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it is tried with **fire**, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:7).*

Here is Strong's definition of the Greek word translated "fire":

G4442 *pur* (poor); **fire**, a primary word; "fire" (literally or figuratively, specifically, lightning): *KJV*, *fiery*, *fire*. [Reference: Job 23:10; Proverbs 17:3, 27:21; Isaiah 48:10; I Corinthians 3:13; Revelation 3:18.]

So what kind of fire is this? It is a refining fire, to purify and to make clean. Its purpose is, once again, to bring about repentance and a change of heart in the presence of God. All sins are burned away and consumed in this fire of God's presence. Thus the sinner is purified, completely dying to sin, so that he can live unendingly in Christ. The fire is unquenchable in the sense that it cannot stop burning away a person's sinful nature until it has been completely destroyed, to be replaced with the Christ-like nature.

## **UNIVERSAL SALVATION**

Here is a list of general Scripture references which, while not exhaustive, should be sufficient to prove that *universal salvation is Biblical and is a common doctrine*. Notice the words “**all**” and “**every**” in many of these verses. What do they mean?

### **Old Testament Proof Texts**

*And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Genesis 12:3).*

*And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed (Genesis 22:18).*

*Who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin (Exodus 34:7).*

*The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol, raises up (I Samuel 2:6).*

*God plans ways so the banished one may not be cast out from Him (II Samuel 14:14).*

*You have put all things under His feet (Psalm 8:6).*

*For His anger is but for a moment (Psalm 30:5).*

*Enemies will give obedience to You. All the earth will worship (Psalm 66:3-4).*

*May He also rule from sea to sea, from the River to the ends of the earth (Psalm 72:8).*

*And let all kings bow down before Him, all nations serve Him (Psalm 72:11).*

*Let all nations call Him blessed (Psalm 72:17).*

*All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God (Psalm 98:3).*

*Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD (Psalm 150:6).*

*And all the nations will stream to the mountain of the Lord (Isaiah 2:2).*

*The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).*

*The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all people on this mountain (Isaiah 25:6).*

*God will swallow up death for all time, will wipe tears away from all faces (Isaiah 25:8).*

*I, even I, am the LORD; And there is no Savior besides Me (Isaiah 43:11).*

*The nations will bless themselves in Him, And in Him they will glory (Jeremiah 4:2).*

*The Lord will not reject forever, if He causes grief, He will have compassion, according to His abundant loving-kindness (Lamentations 3:31-32).*

*God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, rather the wicked turn and live (Ezekiel 33:11).*

*All the people, nations, and men of every language might serve Him (Daniel 7:14).*

*And I will say to those who were not My people, “You are My people.” And they will say, “You are my God!” (Hosea 2:23).*

*I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind (Joel 2:28).*

*He does not retain His anger forever, He delights in unchanging love (Micah 7:18).*

*The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD (Habakkuk 2:14).*

*My name will be great among the nations (Malachi 1:11).*

Other O.T. references:

Genesis 26:4; 28:14; Job 30:23; Psalm 22:27-28; 65:2, 5; 67:2-4, 7; 86:9-10; 96:1-2, 7; 102:18, 22; 103:8-10, 22; 117:1-2, 136; 145:10, 21, 148; Isaiah 12:1-6; 26:19; 35:10; 40:5; 42:10-12; 45:21-25; 49:6; 52:10; 53:10-12; 61:11; 66:23; Jeremiah 16:19; Ezekiel 18:23,3; 34:16; Hosea 1:10; 11:8-9; 13:14; Jonah 2:9; Micah 5:4; Zechariah 2:11; 8:20-23, 9:10; 13:9; 14:9; Malachi 3:15-17.

### **New Testament Proof Texts:**

*For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost (Matthew 18:11).*

*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations (Matthew 28:19).*

*I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people (Luke 2:10-11).*

*And all flesh shall see the salvation of God (Luke 3:6).*

*The Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them (Luke 9:56).*

*For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).*

*That he might bear witness of the light, that all will believe through Him (John 1:7-8).*

*There was true light which, coming into world, enlightens every man (John 1:9-10).*

*Behold, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).*

*The world should be saved through Him (John 3:17).*

*The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand (John 3:35).*

*Know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world (John 4:42).*

*In order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father (John 5:23).*

*The bread of God, Who comes down out of heaven, gives life to the world (John 6:33).*

*I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day (John 6:39).*

*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself (John 12:32).*

*I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world (John 12:47).*

*Whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things (Acts 3:21).*

*That You should bring salvation to the end of the earth (Acts 13:47).*

*One act of righteousness, resulted in justification of life to all men (Romans 5:18).*

*And let all the people praise Him (Romans 15:11).*

*But I want you to understand that Christ is the Head of every man (I Corinthians 11:3).*

*For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive (I Corinthians 15:22).*

*The last enemy that will be abolished is death (I Corinthians 15:26).*

*The summing up of all things in Christ (Ephesians 1:10).*

*And through Him to reconcile all things to Himself (Colossians 1:20).*

*But Christ is All, and in all (Colossians 3:11).*

*In Jesus's name every knee should bow, in Heaven, and in Earth, and under Earth (Philippians 2:10).*

Every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:11).

That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (I Timothy 1:15).

God our Savior, Who desires all men to be saved (I Timothy 2:3-4).

Hope in the living God, Who is the Savior of all men, especially believers (I Timothy 4:10-11).

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men (Titus 2:11).

You have put all things in subjection under His feet (Hebrews 2:8).

Offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Hebrews 10:10).

The propitiation for our sins; not for ours only, but also the whole world (I John 2:2).

The Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world (I John 4:14).

Purchased for God with Your blood, every tribe, tongue, people, nation (Revelation 5:9).

For all the nations will come and worship before You (Revelation 15:4).

Other N.T. references:

Matthew 1:21; 12:21; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 11:51-52; 13:3 17:2; Acts 2:17; Romans 9:25-26; 10:11-13; 11:30-36; II Corinthians 5:14-21; Ephesians 3:9, 15; I Timothy 3:16; II Timothy 2:4; Hebrews 1:2; 2:2; 7:25; I Peter 3:22; II Peter 3:9; Revelation 1:5; 7:9-12; 11:15; 21:3-4.

## SALVATION FOR THE DEVIL AND DEMONS

Now this one may be a little hard to accept. However, think about this for a minute: What

position and state of sinfulness were you in before the Lord came into your life? When we hear that the Devil and demons will one day be redeemed, we think of them in their current state of darkness. In the Scriptures, noted in the Proof Texts section above, you just read numerous examples of how God Almighty is a forgiving God and does not stay angry forever (e.g. in Micah 7:18 the word forever is Strong's H5703 ad: duration, perpetuity).

First, consider these verses:

*I know that You can do **all things**, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted (Job 42:2).*

*You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put **all things** under his feet (Psalm 8:6).*

*Until the period of restoration of **all things** (Acts 3:21).*

***All things** that the Father has are Mine (John 16:15-16).*

*For **all things** are possible with God (Mark 10:27-28).*

*For from Him and through Him and to Him are **all things** (Romans 11:36).*

***All things** in subjection and gave Him to be the Head over **all things** to the church (Ephesians 1:22).*

*You have put **all things** in subjection under His feet (Hebrews 2:8).*

**All things** must also include the Devil and demons.

Here are more verses to consider:

*For He must reign, until He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He has put **all things** under His feet. But when He says **all things** are put under Him, it is manifest*

that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him Who put **all things** under Him, that God may be **All in all** (I Corinthians 15:25-28).

God reconciles **all things** to Himself (Colossians 1:15-20).

Angels and authorities and **powers** being made subject unto Him (I Peter 3:22).

And let **all the angels** of God worship Him (Hebrews 1:6).

**Every** knee will bow, **every** tongue confess (Philippians 2:9-11).

And will not turn back, that to Me **every** knee will bow, **every** tongue will swear allegiance (Isaiah 45:23).

And **every created thing** which is in heaven and on the earth and **under the earth** and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him Who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever" [Greek: Age of the Ages] (Revelation 5:13).

Let's look more closely at one verse in particular:

Who is the image of the invisible God, **the firstborn of every creature**: For **by Him were all things created**, that are **in heaven**, and that are **in earth**, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by him **all things consist**. And He is the Head of the body, **the church**: Who is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead**; that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to **reconcile all things** unto Himself; by Him,

I say, **whether they are things in earth, or things in heaven** (Colossians 1:15-20).

God reconciles **all** things to Himself. Where will the Devil and demons dwell? Certainly, they will not dwell forever in Hell, because they, too, eventually will be reconciled to God.

Moreover, consider this:

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness **in high places** (Ephesians 6:12).

Here is Thayer's definition for the Greek word translated "*high places*":

G2032, **epouranios** (ep-oo-ran'-ee-os); 1) existing in heaven 1a) things that take place in heaven 1b) the heavenly regions 1b1) heaven itself, the abode of God and angels 1b2) the lower heavens, of the stars 1b3) the heavens, of the clouds 1c) the heavenly temple or sanctuary 2) of heavenly origin or nature.

Taking that into consideration, let's look at this next verse, which will show us that even wicked, demonic spirits can be saved:

Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus **every knee** should bow, of **things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth**; And that **every tongue** should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:9-11).

- Strongs G2032 **epouranios** (ep-oo-ran'-ee-os); from G1909 and G3772; above the sky: KJV, celestial, (in) **heaven** (-ly), high.

G1919 **epigeios** (ep-ig'-i-os); from 1909 and 1093; worldly (physically or morally): KJV, earthly, **in earth**, terrestrial.

G2709 **katachthonios** (kat-akh- ►

thon'-ee-os); from G2596 and *chthōn* (the ground); subterranean, *i.e.*, *infernal* (belonging to the world of departed spirits): *KJV* – **under the earth**.

No creature is excluded from the prophecy that all will submit and be reconciled to God – not even the Devil himself!

If every tongue confesses, does the hand of God force this confession? Are all forced and made to confess, or will this big, bad, wrathful God smash them if they don't? **No!**

- Strong's G1843 **exomologeō** (ex-om-ol-og-eh'-o); **confess** from 1537 and 3670; to acknowledge or (by implication of assent) *agree fully: confess, profess, promise*.

Thayer: 1) to confess 2) to profess 2a) **to acknowledge openly and joyfully** 2b) to one's honor: to celebrate, **give praise** to 2c) to profess that one will do something, to promise, agree, engage.

The Bible says that God will bring the Devil and demonic beings to repentance through purposeful correction, which will be a painful but ultimately redemptive process. Here is a verse that has been misunderstood:

*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 **forever and ever*** [Greek: Ages of the Ages a very long time, but not non-ending] (Revelation 20:10).

- Thayer's G928 *basanizō* – (**tormented**): from G931; 1) to test (metals) by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal 2) *to question by applying torture* 3) to torture 4) to vex with grievous pains (of body or mind), to torment 5) to be harassed, to be distressed; 5a) of those who are struggling at sea with a head wind.

G931 *basanos* – (**torment**): 1) a touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with

either metal 2) the rack or instrument of torture by which *one is forced to divulge the truth* 3) torture, torment, acute pains 3a) of the pains of a disease 3b) of those in hell after death.

Tormented and tested until what and for how long? You mean to say that the Bible teaches that God torments!? Yes, **God torments, and God tests**, to save by the process of purification by fire. This is a process used by God for redemption – *not* for the sake of inflicting as much pain as possible, but in order to transform creatures from wickedness to holiness – but we do not know how long this purification will last. What we do know is that it has a benevolent purpose, and God forgives even the demons. I also need to note that the primary meaning of the word “*torment*” means to *test for purity*. The word itself, more often than not, does not even involve the idea of torture.

The words torment, tormented, tormentors and torments occur twenty-one times in the *King James Version*, all in the New Testament. Three of these are in connection with the lake of fire. Let me give you the quotations.

*The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be **TORMENTED WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY ANGELS** [messengers] **AND IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LAMB**: and the smoke of their **torment** ascends up for ever and ever [Greek: unto the ages of the ages]: and they have no rest day nor night ...* (Revelation 14:10-11).

*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* [Greek: unto the ages of the ages] (Revelation 20:10).

Please notice that in both instances the subjects are tormented with fire and brimstone, and we have previously established what the fire and brimstone are.

*(to be continued)*