

VISIONS OF HEAVEN AND HELL BY JOHN BUNYAN

John Bunyan's Vision and Visit to Hell – Seventh Encounter – Part 2 A Famous Atheist in Hell May 31st, 2020

This is the last message on this book, so please read pages 21-24 of the PDF above of John Bunyan's, "Vision of Heaven and Visit to Hell", with the title; **Seventh Encounter, A Famous Atheist in Hell.**

Bunyan says to the atheist the following; *"I would ask another question. I heard yourself and others cry out of burning steel and fire and flames; and yet I cannot discern it. Where there is fire there must be some degree of light; and yet from what appears to me you are still in utter darkness."*

Does this not sound like the church today, for the most part? One could draw an analogy in that they've rejected the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them and as a result, they've ended up walking in darkness.

The atheist says; *"O that I could but say I felt no fire! How much easier my torments would be compared to that which I now find them! But alas, the fire that we endure ten thousand times exceeds all culinary fire in fierceness; and is of quite a different nature from it. There is no light at all attends it, as goes with such fire that burns on earth. But not withstanding all the fire in hell, we are in utter darkness."*

Have you ever been in utter darkness before where you can't see where you're going? We've all been in that position haven't we. Most of the body of Christ today is in utter darkness; they can't see where they're going and they can't discern the Holy Spirit. It can be likened to a deaf and dumb spirit. But here in this story in hell, it's worse as they can't even see in the Spirit. They have no more ability to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Our perception of hell fire stems from that of our understanding of burning fire on earth. But when we think of it, hell is described as a place of outer darkness that is absent of light, and yet how can fire burn without there being light? From Bunyan's perspective, he saw the atheist in hell being tormented by fire that never went out and never consumed the atheist but rather continually burned him.

There is also the fire which came down in the book of Acts on the disciples in the Upper Room. It didn't burn them, yet it landed on them. It didn't consume or burn their physical being, but it consumed and filled them. There was no scorch or smell of fire, yet it consumed and empowered them to go do great works for God. That fire was the Holy Spirit. This fire changes a man and woman by consuming their lives, changing their direction, it causes them to walk upright, to see and hear the call and election on their life, to be bold and to preach the gospel. So it seems that there are two supernatural fires; the fire of the Holy Spirit and God and the fire of hell.

"Our God is a consuming fire" as **Hebrews 12:29** says. **Jeremiah** said in **chapter 20:9**; *"Then I said, 'I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.' But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not."* Jeremiah could not hold back the fire of the Holy Spirit he was feeling. It wasn't hell fire but the fire of the Holy Spirit.

But as for the hell fire that is absent of light in outer darkness that the atheist talks about being in, from his perception gives us the impression that hell is a place of darkness that is absent of light. It's the exact opposite of the Holy Spirit fire in our lives, because that fire is full of the light of Christ. The fire that fell on the disciples was bright light that they could visually see but not to be afraid of as it didn't physically cause pain, but joy inexpressible and full of glory.

To describe it in our natural terms, it would be like a blind man being burned yet not seeing the flames. It was Bunyan that physically saw the atheist, the lake of fire, and the individuals tormented by fire. From Bunyan's perspective, he physically sees everything in hell, but from the atheist's perspective he sees nothing but only feels, hears and smells everything that torments him. Even when the atheist recognizes Bunyan who he knew on earth as Epenetus, it was by hearing his voice and gives no reference to seeing him.

Bunyan says; *"I had no sooner spoken, when one of the tormented wretches cried out with a sad mournful accent, 'Sure, I should know that voice. It must be Epenetus.'" I was amazed to hear my name mentioned by one of the infernal crew; and therefore being desirous to know what it was, I answered, 'Yes, I am Epenetus. But who are you in that sad lost condition that knows me?'"*

To this the lost unknown replied, 'I was once well acquainted with you upon earth and had almost persuaded you to be of my opinion. I am the author of the celebrated book so well known by the title of Leviathan. 'What! the great Hobbs?'" I said. 'Are you come hither?'"

Are you known in hell today? If you were to go to hell in a vision like Bunyan, are there people in hell that would know you? Would they call out your name saying, 'you were the one who preached the gospel to me, the

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one who prayed for me, who gave me food, who continually invited me to church but I continually rejected the invitation.'

Are there those in hell that would know your name and would know the sound of your voice? It's a sobering question isn't it.

There are going to be many a people in hell that know your name and remember what you sound like if you've been salt and light to them in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your repetitious sharing the salvation plan to them will be a continuous reminder that they could have changed, they could have repented, they could have gone to church, they could have become part of the body of Christ, yet all the while, they're being tormented and not consumed by eternal fire.

Jesus describes an aspect of hell in **Matthew 8:12**; "*12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."* Add to this the memories they have of the gospel being preached to them that they rejected. You see, the more people reject the gospel, the harder it is for them to repent.

[Matthew Henry's Commentary](#) on this verse states the following; "*In hell there is fire, but no light; it is utter darkness; darkness in extremity; the highest degree of darkness, without any remainder, or mixture, or hope, of light; not the least gleam or glimpse of it; it is darkness that results from their being shut out of heaven, the land of light; they who are without, are in the regions of darkness; yet that is not the worst of it, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 1. In hell there will be great grief, floods of tears shed to no purpose; anguish of spirit preying eternally upon the vitals, in the sense of the wrath of God, is the torment of the damned. 2. Great indignation: damned sinners will gnash their teeth for spite and vexation, full of the fury of the Lord; seeing with envy the happiness of others, and reflecting with horror upon the former possibility of their own being happy, which is now past.*"

Jesus spoke in **Matthew 22:13** again about the torments of hell; "*13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, [a]take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*"

Also, in **Matthew 25:30** Jesus says; "*30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*"

Who are these people gnashing their teeth at and mad at? God. In hell, there is no way out nor are there fire exits.

Even when you read the dialogs that Bunyan has with all the other individuals in hell, it appears that they talk about the torments of hell as something they feel but don't see, as though blinded by outer darkness, and the only visuals that remain are the memory's of their lives on earth, and the could ofs, would ofs, and should ofs, that add to their torment in hell.

Bunyan says; "*I have observed," I said, "that all of them complain most of the torment that arises from their own sense of guilt, which justifies the punishment. This gloomy prison is the best glass [mirror] to behold sin in its most proper colors; for were there not the greatest malignity [sinfulness] in sin, it would not be rewarded with so extreme a punishment.*"

There are those today that are living their lives in spiritual darkness which is blinding them to the truth of their need for salvation to keep them out of hell.

The Apostle Paul explains this in **2 Corinthians 4:3-4**; "*3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*"

When an individual continually rejects God's salvation plan which saves them from an eternity in hell, it doesn't get easier to obtain salvation but rather they become more spiritually blinded by the devil. Do you know someone like that today?

John 12:35-36 says; "*35 Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."* These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them."

Today there are many who are living the same or similar lives like those Bunyan saw in hell; be it the two friends in hell, the wicked woman, the lost soul, the Christian ministers, the man who followed the wrong minister, and the atheist; they all have the same thing in common that leads them to reject God's Salvation plan; and that is the love of sin. That seems to be the thread through all of their lives; the love of sin.

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The Apostle Paul talks about God's wrath on unrighteousness in **Romans 1:18-32**; "18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who [a]suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is [b]manifest [c]in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and [d]Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like [e]corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their [f]women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the [g]men, leaving the natural use of the [h]woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, [i]sexual immorality, wickedness, [j]covetousness, [k]maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 [l]undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, [m]unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, **knowing** the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them."

You've often heard it said; 'each to their own', 'that's ok, that's their business, that's what they do, I wouldn't do that, but that's what they do'. That's called the 'moral' standards within the 'immoral society'; each to their own. Yet this scripture shows that in saying that, they still approve of those who practice their unrighteous acts.

Are any of the sins above really worth being ultimately given over by God as He gives you over to a debased mind, and then separated from Him for eternity in outer darkness, in the torments of hell fire with Lucifer and his fallen angels? Is it worth it?

The following scriptures declare God's salvation plan for those who repent of their sins. There is a way through Jesus Christ.

John 3:16-20 says; "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. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is **condemned already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed."

John 3:36; "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

Romans 10:9-10 says; "9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

John 14:6; "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Romans 6:23 says; "For the wages of sin is death, but the [a]gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 5:8; "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

1 John 1:9; "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

All these scriptures point only to the truth, who is Jesus Christ, and to what His will is for you. It doesn't matter how much darkness you're walking in today; you can come into the light through Jesus Christ. There is no unrighteousness that cannot be forgiven and cleansed when your born again. The only thing Jesus will not do is overstep your free will. You have to make a decision to come out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light through His free salvation.

The next time you're sharing the gospel with someone, give them the truth about eternity and eternal separation from God. Be bold, preach the gospel with authority. You want to be remembered in hell as one who preached

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the gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone that the Lord brought across your path. On the same note, you don't want your name to be on the lips of someone in hell who you didn't share the gospel with when you had the opportunity too.

As John Bunyan ends his book, he says the following; *“And in a very little space of time I found myself on earth again, and in that very place where I designed to have committed that black sin of being my own murderer, having been overcome by the temptations of the devil, who had persuaded me there was no God.”*

Is the black sin of self murder (suicide) worth an eternity separated from God in hell for?