

God's Salvation Plan

Is God trying to grant salvation to as many as He can? Our God does not try anything—He either does or He does not! Most professing Christians do not have the Holy Spirit. Those that have the Holy Spirit, have the promise of immortality. But that is resting on the promise that God made to us. Salvation will not be accomplished until God fulfills His promise. It is okay to call ourselves saved. But we must realize that, like God, we are speaking of a yet future event. We do not worry because God's promises are sure! Would a God of love condemn a person to torment forever in flames, just because they couldn't quite cut it with Him? Let us look at what God's word says about this: *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"* (Romans 6:23). Does that say the wages of sin is everlasting life in a fire? No, it says death; and death is simply death—you cease to be.

Many use a passage in Revelation to establish everlasting torment for sinners. We shall look at that: *"And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: And they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name"* (Revelation 14:11). First of all, the language of Revelation is quite figurative. Secondly, this could be a case of an event captured on film, tape or digitally. Like we now have films of the Jewish holocaust. They will be preserved forever. To make this smoke, that seems to rise forever, a sure sign of hell, you would have to discount too many other scriptures. It also says they that have the mark of the beast, have no rest day nor night. That is just a picture of their torment. But either all scripture fits together or none of it is valid.

We are given another account of what appears an event filmed or taped. Jesus was warning us of God's judgement: *"And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"* (Mark 9:42-44). It just doesn't make sense to have a maggot that does not die. So there is no hell, where people will be forever tortured. We must conclude that no human will be tortured forever in flames. Hell, in the New Testament, is derived from the Greek hades: which simply means the grave. If anyone can show me a

scripture, of people definitely being tortured in flames forever, I am willing to look. I have searched and it does not seem to be there. Hell's torment was not very popular until the Middle Ages, after Dante's *Inferno* was written. Are we going to let him be our guide—to our fate? All those preachers that claimed you were going to burn forever—were wrong! No one has the right to condemn another to such a fate.

As I pointed out earlier, most people have not been given the Holy Spirit in this life. Satan pretends to be the Holy Spirit and deceives most Christians. *“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”* (2 Corinthians 11:14). How will Jesus address those false Christians? *“And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”* (Matthew 7:23). What will He do with them? *“And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”* (Matthew 25:30).

Their chance will be during the second resurrection. I believe scripture gives us a look at what takes place after the second resurrection. *“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection”* (Revelation 20:5). The first resurrection takes place when Christ returns to earth. After His 1000 year reign, Christ will resurrect the rest of the people of the world; all the people that had not received the Holy Spirit and overcame Satan. Many of these people are today's professing Christians that thought they had salvation. Now notice Revelation 20 verses 7 and 8: *“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: The number of whom is as the sand of the sea.”* Why do you suppose God would let Satan out if He were not using him for His purposes?

This is a period of time when God will fill the earth with all the people that have lived down through history. He will then give them all the Holy Spirit, and let them overcome Satan for themselves. *“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.”* (Joel 2:28,29). Although this prophecy points to Christ's millennial reign, it is still indicative of the judgment period (see Isaiah 65 reference below).

We will have a historical account of the world under Satan for 6000 years; and 1000 years, doing it God's way. The difference will be astounding. Why would our great God go to all the trouble to resurrect people, just to turn around and toss them into fire. For most, the second resurrection is not for just passing sentence on people for their sins. This period has been called the White Throne Judgement. *"And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: And another book was opened, which is the book of life: And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell [Gr. the grave] delivered up the dead which were in them: And they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire"* (Revelation 20:11-15). This Judgement is a period where people will finally have a chance to develop Godly character.

I believe this time period will last 100 years according to the following: *"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: And the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: For, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: And the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: For the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: For as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: And dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord"* (Isaiah 65:17-25). First, it states that they will not remember their former life. Then it tells us that the old man, the child and the sinner will last 100 years. This will be a period of time, the "little season," that Satan will be released.

This is not a popular doctrine among today's Christians. They would rather think that the God of love will condemn everyone to flames forever, that couldn't quite cut it with Him. Not everyone will have the same chance to serve God during this judgement period. *"And he said unto them, in what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city"* (Mark 6:10,11). I'm not sure how these differences will manifest themselves—but there will be differences.

It seems that when we live a good life this time around, it will be easier for us in the judgement. There are some that have received the Holy Spirit in this life, that will not be allowed in the White Throne Judgement. These people knew God and rejected Him, they will not have a second chance. The White Throne Judgement is not a second chance. It is the first and only chance, that most will have. We must be careful though, because if we have seen and heard much and still were evil, we will be handicapped in or denied the judgement. How much have you seen and heard?