



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume XVII  
Issue 422

## Who Does God Hate?

### A Look at God's Wrath, Mercy and What Christ Accomplished

by — Phillip Garrison

*According as it hath been written, "Jacob I did love, and Esau I did hate" (Romans 9:13).*

*He who is not loving did not know God, because God is love (I John 4:8).*

Recently, I sat down and watched a documentary which people had been discussing over the internet. The documentary is titled *Hellbound?* This documentary takes a look at the Christian doctrine of Hell. Mark Driscoll, founding pastor of Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington, is featured in the documentary as a proponent of the eternal conscious torment position on Hell. Throughout the documentary, Driscoll affirms his belief that the overwhelming majority of humanity will be tormented by God, in Hell for eternity.



So, do either of these declarations by Driscoll hold any water when put up against actual Scripture? God declared that He *hated* Esau (see Romans 9:13 above). However, we learn in I John 4:8 that "God is love." John 3:16 declares that "... God so *loved* the world ..." What gives? God's "hatred" of Esau was *relative*. In the absolute perspective, God loves everyone (including Esau); but in relation to His love for Jacob, God hated Esau. It may seem unfair, but God does have favorites. So did Christ. After all, John was the disciple the Lord loved. He loved all of the disciples, but it appears from Scripture that the Apostle John was His favorite. Romans 9:13 is comparative and relative:

*For Him who did not know sin, in our behalf He did make sin, that we may become the righteousness of God in Him (II Corinthians 5:21).*

*The pattern hold thou of sound words, which from me thou didst hear, in faith and love that is in Christ Jesus (II Timothy 1:13).*

That statement, in and of itself, did not surprise me, given that this is the commonly held belief in Christendom. What did surprise me was the shocking honesty which came through in his famous sermon, *Jesus Sweats Blood* of which a portion was shown in *Hellbound?* Driscoll declares, "God hates, right now, personally, objectively, some of you." He goes on to say, "Jesus drank every drop of the wrath of God."<sup>1</sup>

Before I understood from Scripture about Christ's completely successful work on the cross, I would have found Driscoll's comments to be completely "reasonable." I should probably mention that, back then, I never actually bothered to study the Scriptures for myself, but instead simply listened to "men of God" (like Driscoll), assuming that they actually knew what the "hell" they were talking about.

Look at the overall context of Romans 9. Paul, in this chapter of his letter to the Romans, is showing God's sovereignty in His dealings with man. This chapter shows, for example, that it was **God, not Pharaoh**, Who hardened Pharaoh's heart.

What about God's wrath being poured out on Christ at

1. *Hellbound?* 2012, Documentary, written and directed by Kevin Miller; David Rempel, producer.

## **Bible Student's Notebook™**

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- 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 law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
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HATE (continued from front page)

Calvary? Christ paid the penalty for sin which we could not pay but which we deserved, becoming sin for us (II Corinthians 5:21). I have heard pastors say for years that “God poured out His wrath on Christ,” that “Christ drank all of God’s wrath,” etc. However, you will not find that statement anywhere in Scripture. This is what happens when men hold to manmade creeds and doctrinal statements by adding non-scriptural terms and phrases to build theology. This gives a distorted and untrue picture of God and His purposes.

Rather than being “... *The Savior of all men; especially of the believers*” (I Timothy 4:10), He is painted as an angry God Who wants to “drop the hammer” on us; but Christ jumped in the way and took the beating for us. When you see what the Scriptures really say about God and His purposes, we see that God loves us and salvation was His plan before sin even entered the world (Revelation 13:8). See the difference?

*And through Him to reconcile the all things to Himself – having made peace through the blood of His cross – through Him, whether the things upon the earth, whether the things in the heavens. And you – once being alienated, and enemies in the mind, in the evil works, yet now did He reconcile* (Colossians 1:20-21).

Watching *Hellbound*? Driscoll goes on to say, “Some of you, God hates you. God is sick of you. God is frustrated with you. God is wearied by you. God has suffered long enough with you. He doesn’t think you’re cute. He doesn’t think it’s funny.”

I feel sorry for Mark Driscoll’s “god.” If his “god” had just decided to be completely sovereign like the true God of the Scriptures, he would not be so upset and frustrated with his creatures. The God of the Scriptures operates “*all things in accord with the counsel of His will*” (Ephesians 1:11). No one can stay the hand of the God of the Scriptures (Daniel 4:35). The problem with Christendom’s “god” is that he decided to give his creatures the ability to thwart his will. The God of the Scriptures did not. The God of the Scriptures declared, “*I will do all my pleasure*” (Isaiah 46:10). Doing all of His pleasure includes getting His way and doing **all** that He **wills**. I Timothy 2:4 declares that God “**will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth.**”

God’s plan and purposes have *always* been on track and on schedule all along. The true God of the Scriptures we

learn, is completely sovereign, all-knowing, all-powerful, declares the end *from* the beginning, does all of His pleasure, is the Savior of all men, is willing that all be saved and always gets His way. What is there to worry about?

What of God’s wrath and judgments? Both are very real, but must not be stretched beyond what Scripture has to say. The “sheep and goat judgment” of Matthew 25 is a great example. Christendom has disregarded the context of *what* Christ was saying, *to whom* He was saying it and transformed what is a national judgment into an individual judgment. In so doing, it has taken salvation (which is all of grace) and turned it into works-based salvation, judged by whether or not individuals feed and hydrate Israelites (Christ’s brethren). It has also transformed “age-during” benefits or punishment of the nations into “everlasting” benefits or punishment for individuals. That is a complete twisting of the context, all because people fail to “... *rightly divide the Word of Truth*” (II Timothy 2:15).

***For His anger endureth but a moment; in His favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*** (Psalm 30:5).

***O, give thanks unto the God of gods: for His mercy endureth for ever*** (Psalm 136:2).

We are told in the Scriptures, that God’s mercy endures but His anger and wrath are but for a moment. Is this what Christendom teaches? According to Mark Driscoll, “If you die apart from Jesus, He will pour out full strength the full cup of that wrath on you forever.”

Driscoll *must* be talking about the Lake of Fire here. It lasts “forever” does it not? Aside from Scripture which states that God’s mercy endures but His wrath is only temporary, Driscoll (and the rest of Christendom) must be correct. After all, **if** God is going to torment the overwhelming majority of mankind “forever” in the Lake of Fire, surely His wrath *must* outstretch His mercy. Driscoll should let God know.

However, a close examination of the Great White Throne Judgment and the Lake of Fire reveals (at least) three distinct things:

1. The words “anger” or “wrath” are **not** used in connection with the Great White Throne Judgment or the Lake of Fire.
2. The word “torment” is not used in describing the Lake of Fire in connection with humans who are ►

cast into it. Instead, it is called “the second death.” Torment is an aspect reserved only for Satan, the Beast and the False Prophet (who just happen to be immortal beings).

3. The Greek word *aion*, which means “age,” is translated as “ever” by the *King James Version* translators.

Now, before I am accused of heresy or not believing the Word of God, I want to clarify my position. I believe **ALL** of Scripture from Genesis 1:1 through Revelation 22:21. In addition, I believe in ALL of the judgments of God. However, I try not to stretch words beyond their original meaning in the context or insert Pagan philosophy into words, and I do not take passages out of their context. Consider again the “sheep and goat” judgment of Matthew 25.

I used to believe that those who are cast alive into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15; 21:8) are destined to be there forever and ever and ever and ever – but, is that the end of their story? Does God hate these people and plan to pour out unending wrath upon them?

With respect to the previous passage which points out several observations about the Lake of Fire, we need to remember the importance of context, word meaning and not imposing preconceived beliefs onto passages of Scripture.

First, those in the Body of Christ will not stand before the Great White Throne Judgment. The Apostle John, who wrote Revelation (the only book of the Bible where the Great White Throne Judgment and Lake of Fire are found), was an apostle to Israel under the Gospel of the Circumcision. So, Revelation is **to** and **about** Israel. If you are a member of the Body of Christ your apostle is Paul, and Revelation does **not** pertain to you. It is however, **for** you in that you learn about God and His plans, purposes and ultimate goal.

Paul never mentions the Great White Throne Judgment or Lake of Fire. If you are a believer, saved by grace alone through faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-9), neither of these are anything for you to fear.

I believe that the Great White Throne Judgment is for Israel and “unbelieving” believers who identify as Israel who will be judged in light of their works (good or bad). The Lake of Fire will be for those whose names are not found written in The Lamb’s Book of Life and for those who are not “overcomers” (Revelation 2:11).

How can someone who is “unbelieving” be a “believer”? Those in the Body of Christ are justified gratuitously or “freely” (Romans 3:24), and you will find the cases of “unbelieving” believers only in the Hebrew Scriptures and the letters to and about Israel. In part 7 of his study on the Great White Throne, Dan Sheridan points to Hebrews 3 (written to Hebrew believers) where the author of Hebrews (most likely Paul) admonishes these believers not to have “an evil heart of unbelief.”<sup>2</sup> Sheridan goes on to say, “Moses was an unbelieving believer. Want proof? Turn to Numbers 20:12. Here is what Jehovah says to Moses:

*And the Lord spake to Moses and Aaron, “Because ye **believed not**, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.”*

Was Moses not *saved*? Yes, he was saved; but Moses did not partake in the Promised Land due to his unbelief. This seems to be happening at the Great White Throne in general and the Lake of Fire in particular.

This judgment is one of **works** and has nothing to do with salvation or faith.

*And I saw a great white throne, and Him Who is sitting upon it, from Whose face the earth and the heaven did flee away, and place was not found for them; and I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and scrolls were opened, and another scroll was opened, which is that of the life, and the dead were judged out of the things written in the scrolls – according to their work; and the sea did give up those dead in it, and the death and the hades did give up the dead in them, and they were judged, each one according to their works; and the death and the hades were cast to the lake of the fire – this [is] the second death; and if anyone was not found written in the scroll of the life, he was cast to the lake of the fire (Revelation 20:11-15).*

*And if any one may take away from the words of the scroll of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the scroll of the life, and out of the holy city, and the things that have been written in this scroll (Revelation 22:19).*

Before going further, I have to thank Dan Sheridan, who

2. Sheridan, Daniel. *The Great White Throne*, Part 7: The Second Death. [sheridanvoice.com](http://sheridanvoice.com). September 24, 30, 2013.

through his faithful study of the Scriptures, showed me things regarding the Great White Throne, Lake of Fire and the Lamb's Book of Life that I had never discerned before his study on these topics. I would encourage anyone who wants to learn in greater depth about these topics, please go to [sheridanvoice.com](http://sheridanvoice.com) and look for the podcasts on Dan's series entitled *The Great White Throne*, parts 1-7. It is a terrific study.

As with all Scripture, we have to look at the context. Revelation was written by John to the seven Jewish churches in Asia Minor. This book is to and about Israel and is all about God's dealing with unfaithful Israel during the Great Tribulation. Once the Tribulation begins, the dispensation of grace will be over and a *short* age of wrath will ensue; but remember, "*His anger is but for a moment.*"

In Revelation 22:19 we see that people may have their names blotted out of the Lamb's Book of Life for taking away words from the prophecies contained in Revelation. However, we learn in Revelation 20:11-15 that names will also be *added* to the Lamb's Book of Life. Just reading the text in our English translations, we will not see this, but we are told that the Book of Life will get larger during the Great White Throne Judgment. Thanks again to Dan Sheridan for his study on this.

If you will look at the "scroll" in verse 15 of chapter 20, the Greek word *biblos* (Strong's #G976) was used. However, when you see "scroll" in verse 11, the Greek word *biblion* (Strong's #G975) was used. *Biblion* is a smaller *biblos*. You will need a concordance to find this distinction, because the word "scroll" or "book" is used in English translations and no distinction is made to size. When looking at a Greek interlinear text of this passage, you can see the distinction in the text. You will see the word "scrollet" used in verse 11 and "scroll" used in verse 15.

So, as works are judged, names are actually **added** to the Book of Life. The Book gets **larger**. I think there will be more added to the Book of Life and less cast into the Lake of Fire.

If this judgment is specific to Israel (as I now tend to believe it is) and those who are not "overcomers," where are all of the unbelieving heathen judged? While we are not told specifically, it may well happen on Earth during the time of the New Heavens and New Earth according to Job 19:25-29.

What about the Lake of Fire itself? Here, I am limiting

my detailed comments to the subject of humans and the Lake of Fire. For purposes of this article I am excluding Satan, the Beast and False Prophet.

We know that the Lake of Fire is subsequent to the Great White Throne Judgment. Those who are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life are cast into the Lake of Fire. We are not told the duration of the Lake of Fire, but we are told that it is not "without end." I will cover that later.

When you carefully read the passages discussing the Lake of Fire (regarding humans), you will not find the words "torment" or "torture." Unfortunately, these terms are inserted into the context by doctrines and the teaching of men, not Scripture. What you will find is that it is referred to as the "*second death.*" This sounds foolish to have to elaborate; but we must, due to the fact that Christianity has so "paganized" the concept of what "death" is and what it is not. **Death is the absence of life.** Deep down we **know** this, but we have also been terribly brainwashed by religious orthodoxy. **Death is not "life" somewhere else.** What do the Scriptures say about death? Most importantly, we learn that the soul is **not** immortal:

*And of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou dost not eat of it, for in the day of thine eating of it - **dying thou dost die** (Genesis 2:17).*

*The soul that doth sin - it doth die (Ezekiel 18:20).*

*For the living know that they die, and **the dead know not anything** (Ecclesiastes 9:5).*

*Men, brethren! it is permitted to speak with freedom unto you concerning the patriarch David, **that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is among us unto this day** (Acts 2:29).*

There is **NO** hope in death. Our hope is in Christ resurrecting us to immortality. "Death" is not "life," nor is it a euphemism for eternal torment. We cannot stretch words beyond what they mean or ascribe meanings to them beyond the context and arrive at a sound doctrinal belief.

Those who are resurrected to face the Great White Throne Judgment and cast into the Lake of Fire are raised to **mortality** (think of Lazarus in John 11:1-12:20), **not immortality**. Those cast into the Lake of Fire **must** be raised to mortality, or else, how can they ►

die a second time? One who is immortal cannot die.

While we are not told how long those who are cast into the Lake of Fire (the second death) will be dead, I believe it will be a long time. How do we know that it does not last forever? Doesn't the Bible teach that the Lake of Fire lasts "forever and ever"? In the passages referring to humans and the Lake of Fire, no reference as to duration is made. In the passages speaking of Satan, the Beast and False Prophet, the word *aion* is used twice: *aion aion*. From this, the *King James Version* translates this as "forever and ever." The meaning of *aion*, however, is not "without end," "forever," "eternity," etc. The word *aion* actually means "age," and is the word which we transliterate as the English word "eon." There are a few Bible translations which translate this word correctly and consistently. *Young's Literal Translation (YLT)* and the *Concordant Literal Translation (CLT)* are two of these. The *King James Version (KJV)* and many subsequent translations do not translate correctly nor consistently when it comes to *aion*. Let's look at Matthew 28:20 to show an example of what I mean. Keep in mind that the Greek word *kosmos* means "world," and the Greek word *aion* means "age."

*Teaching them to observe all, whatever I did command you, and lo, I am with you all the days – till the full end of the age (YLT).*

*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world Amen (KJV).*

The highlighted word in both examples given above was originally *aion* in the Greek. So, if the *KJV* translators had consistently translated *aion*, they would have rendered it as "forever" – but that would not have made sense, so they rendered it "world." The preceding is an example of translating with a doctrinal bias.

*For since through man is the death, also through man is a rising again of the dead, for even as in Adam all die, so also in the Christ all shall be made alive, and each in his proper order, a first-fruit Christ, afterwards those who are the Christ's, in His presence, then – the end, when He may deliver up the reign to God, even the Father, when He may have made useless all rule, and all authority and power – for it behoveth Him to reign till He may have put all the enemies under His feet – the last enemy is done away – death; for all things He did put under His feet, and, when one may say that all*

*things have been subjected, it is evident that He is excepted who did subject the all things to Him, and when the all things may be subjected to Him, then the Son also Himself shall be subject to Him, who did subject to Him the all things, that God may be the All in all (I Corinthians 15:21-28).*

At this point, you may be saying, "O.k., maybe *aion* doesn't mean 'without end,' but we do not know anything about those cast into the Lake of Fire beyond what is said in Revelation 21:8." While Revelation is the final book in Scripture and chapter 22 says nothing further about them, we do see beyond this point in I Corinthians 15:21-28, which takes place just prior to the consummation of time.

The Apostle Paul was given revelations by Christ, beyond what was given to the "12" including John. The above passage is as far into the future as God has chosen to reveal to us in Scripture. This passage is packed with remarkable and exciting information.

Verse 22 is much like Romans 5:18. Both passages talk about Adam and Christ heading up humanity. Adam's offense had its universal effect on humanity. No Christian I know of, disputes this fact. When it comes to Adam's sin and all of humanity falling under the curse and penalty through no act of their own, everyone seems to be in agreement. However, no Christian that I know of believes that Christ's act of righteousness affects the same "all" referenced under Adam's act, even though this is clearly what Scripture says. The "so also" between the two segments of the verse acts as a literary "equal sign." The fact is, the same "all" who die because of Adam are the same "all" who will be vivified (made immortal) through Christ.

Verse 23 shows that *all* will be made alive, but "each in his proper order." Not everyone will be resurrected to immortality at the same time. First, those who are members of the Body of Christ (both living and dead) will be snatched away and made immortal (I Thessalonians 4:15-17; I Corinthians 15:51-55); then at Christ's second coming, those who are members of the Bride will be resurrected (Revelation 20:4-6) to immortality as part of Christ's millennial reign.

Verses 24-28 are very interesting, and much takes place in these five short verses of Scripture. These passages take us in time from Christ's 1,000 year reign all of the way through the final age of time known as the New Heavens and New Earth (II Peter 3:10-13).



This is extraordinary, because what do we read will happen in I Corinthians 15:26? Christ will finally abolish the final enemy: death. The only death existing during this place in time is of those who are still dead; not having been resurrected to immortality yet. Now that we know that “death”: is not “life” somewhere else, and that the Lake of Fire is literally the “*second death*,” we can understand what it means when we read that Christ will abolish death once and for all.

In :28 we see (at the end of time) that, through Christ’s work, God will become “*All in all*” – not “All” in “some” or “All” in a very “few.” Knowing this truth allows us to believe the passages which teach that Christ is a successful Savior and not a potential Savior. It allows us to believe all of Scripture and see that Christ truly did “finish” the work of salvation at the cross.

*On the morrow John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, “Lo, the Lamb of God, **who is taking away the sin of the world**” (John 1:29).*

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

*For the Son of Man came **to seek and to save the lost** (Luke 19:10).*

*And to him who is **not working**, and is believing upon **Him Who is declaring righteous the impious**, his faith is reckoned – to righteousness (Romans 4:5).*

*So, then, as through one offence to all men it is to condemnation, so also through one declaration of “**Righteous**” it is to all men to justification of life (Romans 5:18).*

***How that God was in Christ – a world reconciling to Himself, not reckoning to them their trespasses; and having put in us the Word of the reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:19).***

***For by grace ye are having been saved, through faith, and this not of you – of God the gift, not of works, that no one may boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).***

*Because in Him it did please all the fullness to tabernacle, and **through Him to reconcile the all things to Himself – having made peace through the blood of His cross – through Him, whether the things upon the earth, whether the things in***

***the heavens. And you – once being alienated, and enemies in the mind, in the evil works, yet now did He reconcile (Colossians 1:19-21).***

*And you – being dead in the trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh – He made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all the trespasses, having blotted out the handwriting in the ordinances that is against us, that was contrary to us, and **He hath taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross** (Colossians 2:13-14).*

*For for this we both labor and are reproached, because we hope on the living God, who is Savior of all men – **especially of those believing** (I Timothy 4:10).*

So, does God hate anyone? From my studies of Scripture and my faith in Christ and God’s plan of salvation to redeem man and bring glory to Himself, I have to say, “No.”

If the concept that God will save all men through no effort of their own but through Christ’s work on the cross is foreign to you, I suggest the following:

- First, pray that the Holy Spirit will lead you into truth.
- Do a word study on “hell.” Look at the one Hebrew word (in the Old Testament) translated as “hell” in most versions.
- When studying the occurrences of these words ask yourself, “If **hell** means eternal torment, then where would people in the Hebrew scriptures have gotten that idea?” God warned of “death” as the penalty for sin. Moses (as well as the other prophets) warned of “death” and other earthly penalties for sin, not eternal torment.
- Do a word study on the Greek words translated as “hell” in the New Testament. Hint: when Christ uses the word “hell,” go back to Isaiah 66:24 to see what He was talking about.
- Do a similar study of the words “ever,” “eternal,” “everlasting,” “forever,” “eternity.”
- Be sure to rightly divide Scripture (II Timothy 2:15), taking note of who is speaking, to whom it is being said, what is being said and what comes before and follows after.

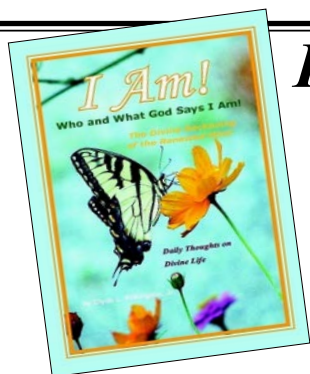
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People are always talking about their attempts to discover their true selves – of trying to “find themselves.” The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ needs to find out who they *really* are. This doesn’t need to be such a difficult search. All that is really needed is a careful look at the Scriptures, and a simple faith in the words of who and what God says we are. God knows who we are; all we need to do is to *believe Him*. This book catalogs the Divine Record of who and what God says that you are. It is a short encyclopedia of faith – the truth about you. It is the truth about you, simply because it is *God* Who has said it. God has spoken these truths concerning you – the *real* you. Believe His record! Refuse to be the shell of a person, pushed into a mold of Adamic conformity. Be the real you that God has uniquely designed you to be. Refuse to be bullied out of your divinely designed identity that our Father has given you.

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