

No. 10
THE SECOND DEATH

by
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“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. On such the Second Death has no power.”

Revelation 20:6

It is generally understood that the wicked, after death, are cast into the tormenting flames of Hell. However, the final destination of the wicked is far more fearful than that. Their eternal judgment is so horrible, so full of unimaginable terror and torment, that clear description of it eludes all human expression. In Revelation, it is simply called “The Second Death”. This Second Death is not Hell; it is a place of such pain and terror that Hell itself will be cast into it (Rev. 20:11-15)! Hell is now used by God only as a holding place for the unrighteous dead until the Final Judgment is completed. After that, all who are in Hell – and Hell itself – are cast into the “Lake of Fire”. This Lake of Fire is **“The Second Death”**.

The Scriptures reveal frighteningly gruesome details of this Second Death which awaits the damned. Of the awful judgment of the wicked, the



Psalms 49:19) wrote, *“They shall never see light”* (Ps. 49:19). What a terrifying thought, to be bound forever, unable to die, in a sepulchre of pitch blackness! The Lake of Fire burns with a flame that gives no

light! Three times, Jesus referred to this as “outer darkness” (Mt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30), adding, *“In that place, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”* King Solomon called this miserable place “obscure darkness” (Prov. 20:20). Peter referred to the suffocating thickness of the darkness as a “mist of darkness” (2Pet. 2:17). Jude used the phrase, “blackness of darkness” (Jude 13). With the inadequate tool of earthly language, these wise men attempted to describe an indescribable, chilling fact of eternity.

Of the Second Death, Jesus suggested a dreadful element beyond the darkness when he said, *“Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness”* (Mt. 22:13). In the Lake of Fire, there will be no choices. No, not so much as to lift a hand or turn the head. The damned will be tightly bound in blackness forever.

The most impressive testimony I have heard concerning this came from a sister who was taken in a vision to this final abode of the damned. With deep emotion, she labored to describe the darkness. “The blackest darkness in this world,” she said, “has a grey tint in comparison to that darkness. It is an oppressive darkness in which the individual is overwhelmed with a sense of absolute hopelessness, the utter absence of choice.” Oh, the awesome wrath of God! An eternity of being bound in thick darkness and unrelenting pain, with no choice about anything! My dear friend, let us obey God, that we may be counted worthy to escape these things. The sister who tasted of the Second Death told of returning to consciousness with an awareness of someone in that horrid place screaming in terror, only to find, when she awoke, that the screams were her own.

The Second Death is more than this, more than the thick, terrifying blackness, more than the eternal absence of all choice, more than the utter hopelessness. For, there is also in the Second Death the element of unimaginable torment, likened in the Scriptures to being burned alive. It is a place of *“everlasting punishment”* where *“the fire is not quenched”* (Mt. 25:41-46). Jesus told his followers that the torment of the damned would be so insufferable that, if necessary, it would be better to cut off parts of our bodies to avoid it (Mt. 18:8-9; Mk. 9:43-48).

After Christ’s millennial reign on the earth, the Devil will be cast into *“the Lake of Fire burning with brimstone, and will be tormented day and night for ever and ever”* (Rev. 20:10). Then, following the great White Throne Judgment, *“death and Hell”* and *“whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life”* are all cast into the Lake of Fire, *“which is the Second Death”*. We can scarcely imagine such horror. There is nothing in this universe like it.



THE FEAR OF GOD

Paul knew *“the terror of the Lord”* (2Cor. 5:11), and Jesus himself feared God (Heb. 5:7-9); but the wicked do not fear Him (Ps. 36:1; Rom. 3:18). It is true, as John said, that the love of God casts out all fear (1Jn. 4:17-18), but the fear it casts out is the fear of everything *except God*. Jesus warned all his followers to fear Him (Lk. 12:4-5).

The fear of God is clean (Ps. 19:9), for it causes those who have it to hate ungodliness (Prov. 8:13). It keeps us humble (Rom. 11:17-22) and places us in a position to receive the blessings of God (Ps. 103:11-17). It inspires us both to speak against evil (Ps. 139:19-20) and to praise and worship Him who inhabits eternity (Rev. 14:7; 19:5). Noah was moved by the fear of God to build the ark (Heb. 11:7), and those who are of like faith today are moved by that same fear to prepare for the coming destruction of this creation, for *“the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up”* (2Pet. 3:10).

Yes, the heavens and the earth which exist now will be destroyed, and God will create new heavens and a new earth for His chosen people. *“Heaven and earth shall pass away,”* said Jesus, *“but my words shall not pass away.”* Destruction is determined for this whole creation, and, except for those who obey Christ, it is inescapable. How thankful we are for Jesus, our refuge from the approaching storm! He is the only hope for mankind, and he is the only hope we need. There is none other by whom we can be saved from the coming wrath (Acts 4:12). Let us quickly humble ourselves to him who died for us!

We rejoice because the only one who is able to save us from the Second Death dearly loves us. God’s offer of forgiveness and cleansing from sins through the name of Jesus is still being made. Thankfully, the Spirit’s call, voiced by the ancient prophet Isaiah, has not yet been repealed: *“Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. And let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon”* (Isa. 55:6-7). Christ Jesus offers us hope of eternal life, hope of escaping the terrors of the damned. May God grant us grace to take advantage of this precious offer.

ARE YOU READY?

George C. Clark, Sr. and John David Clark, Sr.

1

When you see the clouds approaching with our Lord, who’s coming down,
Will you be among the number who receive a starry crown?
It takes more than merely seeking to arise and go with him.
You must strive if you would enter with a life set free from sin.

- CHORUS -

I am ready for the coming of my blessed Lord divine.
As the bride said in the Bible,
“I am his, and he is mine.”
Wearing garments Jesus gave me, made of linen “clean and fine”,
I am ready for the coming of the Bridegroom anytime.

2

Just a few are standing ready for this call to rise and go.
Don’t be fooled and left here stranded; this can happen, don’t you know?
Now’s the day to buy salvation, but your money you can keep.
You don’t have to have a penny, just bow low at Jesus’ feet.

3

Can’t you hear the Spirit calling, “Come and join my waiting bride”?
She’ll be decked with precious jewels as she stands there by his side.
Are you dressing for the wedding?
Can’t you see he’s coming soon?
Then be ready, faithful pilgrim, for this royal honeymoon.

4

Can’t you see the clouds arising?
Can’t you hear the thunders roar?
Are you ready for the banquet when he calls from shore to shore?
I can see the table waiting for his chosen bride so fair.
Tell me, loved-one, will you meet me?
Shall I look for you up there?

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