

## **MOST ARE DAMNED**

### **Only a Few Will Go to Jesus' Heaven**

The Bible, the book God supposedly wrote, says that most people will go to the place of torment, Hell, that never ends when they die and there is nothing they can do about it once they get there. Jesus wrote nothing but commissioned others to write and said he would ensure it was the truth. So if the apostles and New Testament say it is hard to go to Heaven then that is true.

Some say today that Hell is empty or near-empty. This does not fit St Paul's fear that having a clear conscience like him has nothing at all to do with showing you are right with God and acquitted for sins. You could have sins you do not see or maybe you do not see that your repentance is fake. Paul feared being a reject.

Jesus when asked if many would be saved said that few are chosen for salvation though many are called. That was a way of saying no. The whole context of the Bible and the tradition he spoke in shows he meant it.

Paul says he aims to be all to all men to save some of them. Not all will be saved even if Paul preaches to all.

They say the Devil is there but nobody else but if you read Revelation 20:10 and 20:15 it is clear that people were found to have their names absent from the book of life and thus were thrown into Hell. Jesus said in Matthew 10:28 that you must not fear those who can kill your body but the one who can kill your body and soul in Hell. The word apollumi means ruin or lose but not necessarily extinction. In 2 Peter 3:6-9 it refers to the earth being wrecked by the flood. That did not mean annihilation or anything like that.

Most people will be damned forever for their sins. This is hardly surprising when the book of Ecclesiastes says that laughing (2:1) and everything we do below the sun is pointless and just vanity (1:2). Vanity is a sin. The book does not mean that all human works are useless – even sin has its uses - it means that they are nothing to be proud of in the final analysis for there is no real goodness in them just pride. Even the humble person must be proud of his humility.

The teaching of holiness has been abandoned by virtually the entire Christian Church. Holy means separate – keeping away from what or whoever is unclean and doing it for God. In the Jewish law, the Jews were commanded to avoid unclean things no matter what. Jesus in Mark 7 said that a man was made unclean by his intentions and his will. So you are not to have anything to do with sinners. But we all do. We go to weddings of unrepentant people who lived in sin first.

It is not surprising that the Bible says that the vast majority of our works are sinful (Romans 3) and makes no distinction between sins that deserve eternal punishing and those that don't. Roman Catholicism has made such a distinction but it is arbitrary and not in the Bible. The Bible against Catholicism says that all sin merits the endless agonies of Hell. Thus the Catholic Church is a dangerous form of Christianity in Bible eyes. Also, the Bible says that nobody is perfectly righteous at any moment in this life and all sin at some level (1 John 1:8). And it says that if you sin all your works will be sins until you repent even if they are good works (James 3:9,12).

Paul said that many will receive the salvation won by Jesus (Romans 5:15,19). But many can mean anything. If salvation is very unlikely and a thousand make it that is many. Its as many as can be expected. He didn't say most and he didn't say all. That is very important. We must not forget that Paul didn't have that many converts at that time and he was ready for the second coming any minute. His many must be understood in that context. He chose to use that word for he didn't know what else to use. It was the most neutral word he could use. Did he mean that many of his converts would be saved? Then it follows that a small number would be saved.

Romans 8 says that anybody who has the spirit of God is a son of God. This means Christians for there is no hint that it can be any other kind of people. And the real Christians are as uncommon as papal offspring. There are millions of Christian denominations and every one claims to have the correct Christian faith and that every other group is in error. When Paul said that even Christians will not be saved from sin and death if Jesus has not risen he is saying that sincerity is no good at all and people have to have the right gospel to be saved meaning that salvation is only for a handful.

The Book of Revelation, Chapter 7, states that 144,000 men will be saved or sealed as the slaves of God. Seals are final so they are servants of God forever. The angels sealed and took these servants of God from the earth. They pick members of the Israelite tribes only. Christians say it can't mean Jews only so it is a symbol. But it could for anybody could have Jewish blood in them for the Bible says the Jews were scattered.

Paul said that we are all Jews – spiritually – if we keep true to Christ. God could rig it that this exact number could be saved too. He did stranger things after all and it is Bible doctrine that you cannot be saved unless God gives you the gift of faith. Applying this interpretation to Revelation 7 however is stretched. It seems to mean that 12,000 will be taken from every tribe in Israel. The spiritual Jews are Jews in the sense that they are descended from Abraham. Paul regarded the children of Israel as Jews in another sense and did not say that a spiritual Jew is a son of Israel (Galatians 3:29). So a Jew as in son of Israel is a genetic Jew and a spiritual Jew is a son of Abraham - a Jew in a broad sense.

It could mean then that if we are talking about Christianity, there are people who belong to Jewish tribes perhaps without knowing it and God will save 144,000 of them in total.

But if it is Jews then when God chooses so few of his chosen people for salvation things will not be any more encouraging for the rest of us. The 144,000 sang a new song that nobody else could learn. This means they were singing of their salvation and nobody else was allowed to sing this hymn.

After the 144,000 are mentioned the scriptures mention a great numberless crowd praising God. Some think the 144,000 is symbolic and refers to the same crowd (page 175, *The Book of Revelation for Dummies*). This is wrong for why use such confusing symbolism and how can a numbered crowd symbolise an innumerable crowd?

So God chooses 144,000 Jews who have to be spotless virgins.

There is no evidence that the 144,000 is to be taken figuratively. Even if it is, it still indicates that the number of the finally saved is tiny.

Some say as the 144,000 includes Israel's tribes but as Dan and Ephraim is left out the reference is symbolic. So the 144,000 is figurative for the tribe of Dan has been left out but it is there by implication for it says all the tribes and it is omitted from explicit mention probably because Dan was the black sheep tribe (page 432, *Encyclopaedia of Bible Difficulties*).

Bible scholars agree that the figure could be literal (page 433, *ibid*). The view that the idea that only 144,000 will be accepted by God is elitist and contradicts the assertions of Galatians 3:28,29; Colossians 3:11 about there being no elitism with God is a common view. But it is wrong. The Bible says that all who really want to come to God will come.

Revelation also says that they will be virgins or parthenoi probably in view that they will comprise the Church which will be the bride of the lamb of God and a virgin for Christ – their not being real virgins being a different issue though to me it is still a hint that virgins are preferred for they could have been called chaste not virgins and chastity does not rule out sex but only illicit sex. Since God forgives sexual sin it is possible that the virgins are not physically virgins but are virgins in God's eyes because he forgave them.

The 144,000 are Jewish Christians because it seems that it is only Jerusalem where God is praised (Revelation 11:13).

There are twenty-four elders with the 144,000 but the elders could be angels or the Old Testament prophets who were saved.

Then after the 144,000, Christians say they read about a great crowd of innumerable saints being safe in Heaven and free from suffering and worshipping God all the time in his temple in Heaven. This appears to be a different group from the 144,000.

The crowd is made up of people who suffered intensely for their faith in Christ. What Revelation tells us about them is that they wore white robes and carried palm branches and praised God and the Lamb and the author says that a member of the Heavenly Sanhedrin told him they came through the persecution and made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. They stand before the Throne of God in his Temple and they hunger no more and they thirst no more. And the sun or heat doesn't smite them for the Lamb will be their shepherd and will guide them to springs of water that give life and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

They might stand before God and use his Temple but that doesn't mean they are saved. The passage doesn't say they have any more contact with God than any living person can have. If they are saved then why do they still need the Lamb to guide them to the waters of salvation? They are protected by God. They can dirty their robes again for it is only if their robes keep white that the Lamb can guide them. The reference to the sun and heat not smiting them is similar to the promise of the psalm that if you do the will of God the sun and the moon will not harm you. It's not to be taken too literally. Nothing in Revelation hints that the number of the saved will be high. On the contrary it hints that the number will be very low.

The message is that God is giving the grace of saving faith only to Jewish virgins and to some Gentiles who have suffered intensely for him which indicates that only those who live incredibly holy lives have received the grace of faith and will go to Heaven. Only unique people will be saved which implies that this is not many when you think of how many people have come and gone and are still here on the earth.

There is no reason to suppose that the 144,000 and the great crowd refer to something that is yet to come. That would leave it possible to insist that the references to them do not indicate that the number of the saved will be small for the great tribulation and the disasters and earthquakes that they will see on earth have been happening bit by bit since Revelation was written. Before the 144,000 was mentioned we were told that the Lamb opened the fifth seal in Heaven to the pleadings of a crowd in Heaven who had been martyred and wanted him to take revenge for them and they were told to wait until more martyrs would come to join them at the foot of God's altar in Heaven. So the great crowd is being made up even now.

Revelation says that anybody who misrepresents the book will be lost implying that the saved will be those who understand it perfectly by the power of God (22). Thus, the book means it when it says salvation is just for a few. Verses that speak of the almost total depravity of the world serve to underline that (eg, 16:10, 11).

The Church says we do not know how high the rate of everlasting damnations is. We have to assume that it is very high to be on the safe side. It is better to die of fear than to suffer in Hell forever or risk Hell. This means that it is wise to murder anybody who draws others into sin. Humanists should be murdered for trying to draw Christians into the so-called sin of apostasy or disbelief. It is a sin to let the people who are a stumbling block to God's people live. The doctrine of the Christian Church is responsible for the burning to death at the stake and torturing of heretics which both the Catholic and Protestants considered noble activities not too long ago. Those who won't kill are hypocrites and those who do are nutters. Thus, the argument that it is worse not to believe in Hell is completely exploded. If most believers in Hell won't become full fanatics that is only because their faith is too weak so they are no argument for the safety of the doctrine.

Jesus said that his yoke was easy and his burden light and the First Epistle of John tells us that the commandments are not difficult. From this it would suggest that most people should be saved. How can it be reconciled with the statements of primitive Christianity that only few can be saved? By holding that correct and orthodox faith is necessary for salvation. Few people are orthodox. Protestants hold that everybody is trapped in sin until they turn to Christ in faith. "In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed, a righteousness that comes by faith from beginning to end, just as it is written, "The just one will live by faith" (Romans 1:17). Luther reasoned that since the righteousness of God condemns the sinner, how does this have a righteousness that doesn't condemn? The answer for him was that faith was entire self-abandonment to God, you abandon yourself because you can do nothing to save yourself and the work is all his. He saves you and you believe as a result. You are clothed with righteousness in his sight like a robe but in yourself you are still unrighteous. Few understand salvation by faith alone without good works and the Roman Catholic Church rejects it as heresy so few will have any hope of being saved.

The Roman Catholic Church has officially and infallibly decreed against the Reformers at the Council of Trent that nobody can know beyond any peradventure of a doubt that they will enter Heaven when they die (Canon 30, Session 6, Justification) which tells us that mortal sin must be extremely common and every person commits it a lot and may only think that he is right with God now and be proved wrong at the judgment after his death.

Christianity has sometimes suppressed or ignored the doctrine of salvation for a handful for it is bad for business and her schemes to court popularity. But the fact remains the tradition of the Church and the scriptures teach that it is the correct view.

APOLOGETICS AND CATHOLIC DOCTRINE, Most Rev M Sheehan DD, M H Gill & Son, Dublin, 1954

APOLOGETICS FOR THE PULPIT, Aloysius Roche, Burns Oates & Washbourne LTD, London, 1950

ENCHIRIDION SYMBOLORUM ET DEFINITIONUM, Heinrich Joseph Denzinger, Edited by A Schonmetzer, Barcelona, 1963

'GOD, THAT'S NOT FAIR!' Dick Dowsett, [OMF Books, Overseas Missionary Fellowship, Belmont, The Vine, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3TZ] Kent, 1982

HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS, Peter Kreeft & Ronald Tacelli, Monarch, East Sussex, 1994

HAVE WE TO FEAR A DEVIL? Fred Pearce, The Christadelphian Office, Birmingham

HEAVEN AND HELL Dudley Fifield, Christadelphian Publishing Office, Birmingham

HELL – WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT IT, John R Rice, Sword of the Lord, Murfreesboro, 1945

JEHOVAH OF THE WATCH-TOWER, Walter Martin and Norman Klann, Bethany House, Minnesota, 1974

LIFE IN CHRIST, PART 3, Fergal McGrath SJ, M H Gill and Son Ltd, Dublin, 1960

RADIO REPLIES VOL 1, Frs Rumble and Carty, Radio Replies Press, St Paul, Minnesota, 1938

REASON AND BELIEF, Bland Blanshard, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1974

REVELATION ITS GRAND CLIMAX AT HAND! Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 1988

THE BIBLE TELLS US SO, R B Kuiper, The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1978

THE BOOK OF REVELATION FOR DUMMIES, Larry R Helyer, PhD, Richard Wagner, Wiley Publishing Inc., Indiana, 2008  
THE DEVIL, THE GREAT DECEIVER Peter Watkins, The Christadelphian Birmingham, 1992  
THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BIBLE DIFFICULTIES, Gleason W Archer, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1982  
THE FOUR MAJOR CULTS, AA Hoekema, Paternoster Press, Carlisle, 1992  
THE KINDNESS OF GOD, EJ Cuskelly MSC, Mercier Press, Cork, 1965  
THE LIFE OF ALL LIVING, Fulton J Sheen, Image Books, New York, 1979  
THE REAL DEVIL, Alan Hayward, Christadelphian Bible Mission, Birmingham  
THE REALITY OF HELL, St Alphonsus Liguori, Augustine Publishing Company, Devon, 1988  
THE SERMONS OF ST ALPHONSUS LIGOURI, St Alphonsus Ligouri, TAN, Illinois, 1982  
THE TRUTH ABOUT HELL, Dawn Bible Students, East Rutherford, NJ  
WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT HELL? Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1986  
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HEAVEN?, Dave Hunt, Harvest House, Eugene, Oregon, 1988  
WHY DOES GOD? Domenico Grasso SJ, St Paul Publications, Bucks, 1970