

Purgatory versus the Bible

The Bible does not teach the Catholic doctrine that if you die in God's friendship that you may need purification in purgatory before you get into Heaven.

BAD BIBLE ARGUMENTS FOR PURGATORY

Every Catholic argument from the Bible in favour of Purgatory is a hoax.

The Second Book of Maccabees, which Rome has illicitly added to the real Bible, says that it is a holy thing to pray for the dead that they be released from sins (12). It could be a holy thought to do that but lots of wrong actions are holy if they are sincerely believed in. Notice that the chapter evaluates the action from Judas' perspective and not objectively. It says he did well for he did it because of his expectation of the resurrection and that it was a holy thing to do when he believed it would get the dead rewarded at the resurrection. It is saying that he did right in his heart but not that he was right. Catholics pray to get souls out of Purgatory but Maccabees says Judas prayed for the dead because of the resurrection. Praying to get the sins of the dead forgotten about is not the same as praying for their sufferings in Purgatory to be reduced. The dead might not be punished at the resurrection but they might have fewer rewards then and the purpose of the sacrificing was to win them more blessings. The book says that it is bad to pray for the dead if the resurrection is not believed in. The Catholic would have to say that the dead ought to be prayed for even if there is no resurrection because there is a Purgatory. And people don't need to be resurrected to survive death. When the book says that the dead must be prayed for to atone for their sins and sacrifices may be bought for that purpose just because they will rise again it is obvious that the resurrection is considered to be their only chance of survival. Therefore the chapter denies the existence of Purgatory which is the habitation of disembodied souls. The sin of the dead that Judas tried to atone for was idolatry which is considered to be a serious sin in the Bible. The Catholic Church says that all who die in it go to Hell forever and you cannot pray anybody out of that place. The chapter contradicts the Catholic doctrine that Hell is not Purgatory. The chapter is heretical if it says that a sacrifice can atone for the sins of the dead which would contradict the Christian doctrine that killing animals cannot remove sin (Hebrews 10:4). The Bible says that Jesus died for our sins not some of them or parts of them.

It seems that the key clauses in the text have not been translated right. There is reason to believe that instead of the book saying that sacrifices were paid for to be offered in atonement for the sins of the dead it says that the sacrifices were paid for to be offered because of sins which would change the meaning of the passage to make it say that the sacrifices were offered because of the sins of the surviving soldiers (page 9, Purgatory). Perhaps the sacrifices were offered as an apology to God for the sins and were not intended to bring any benefit to the dead?

In Matthew 5:25, Jesus says the sinner is in prison until he or she pays the last penny. This is thought to speak of Purgatory. But the word until is often used non-literally in the Bible. God says in Isaiah 46:4 that he will exist until the House of Jacob grows old. He does not mean that he will annihilate himself when that happens. But you could go to Hell forever until you pay the last penny. In that case, you will never get out for you will never pay the last penny.

Paul is alleged by the Church to have spoken of Purgatory at 1 Corinthians 3:13-15. But Protestants assume this fire tests a person's work while Purgatory does not. Purgatory purifies a person. And nobody can do a good work there for only suffering and the prayers of others can get them out. It is not about testing works at all so Paul's words do not back up Purgatory. Catholics reply that you cannot try the work without trying the person doing the work. The fire tests everybody and not just those who go to Purgatory. Moreover, the fire tests the good man's work as well as the sinful man's – it tests everybody's while Catholics deny that all will go to Purgatory. The good man's work will get a reward while the evil man will be saved by fire in their philosophy. The Church says that the souls in Purgatory are not saved by fire for they are already saved for they cannot lose God and are destined for Heaven. Paul refers to the Day of Judgment when there could be no Purgatory.

In Second Peter 3, Jesus seemingly preached to the dead who had lived in Noah's day. This does not refer to Purgatory but just to Jesus preaching to people who are now dead. Some speculate that it is about the Limbus Patrum where the holy people born and dead before Jesus stayed until he opened Heaven. Nothing is said about these people paying for sins or even repenting at Jesus' preaching. And it is possible that it is believed that the author is claiming that Jesus before he was born appeared in spirit to the people living in Noah's day and not the dead at all.

DOES JESUS SAY SINS CAN BE PARDONED IN AFTERLIFE?

“Whoever says a bad word against the Son of man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come”. What a scary text! Church father and Pope, Gregory the Great concluded that “From this sentence we understand that certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come” (Dialogues 4, 39).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1030-1032) claims that when Jesus said that there is a sin that will not be pardoned in this world or in the world to come that there must be sin that is pardoned in the afterlife (Matthew 12:32). So, they argue that this refers to sin that is forgiven in Purgatory for there is no pardon in Hell and no sin in Heaven to be pardoned in it. But Jesus’ words do not imply any such idea for he only said that there was sin that would not be forgiven in this world or the next meaning Hell. To say there is a cat in the kitchen is not to imply that there is a dog in the hall.

If you tell somebody that you will never forgive them in this world or in the next it is just a poetic way of saying you will never forgive. It does not imply you necessarily think there is a life after death. It does not imply that you think there is forgiveness in the next life.

And what sin would Jesus be thinking of as forgivable in the afterlife if we think the Catholics are right about the text? Clearly he would then be saying, those who insult Jesus will be forgiven in this life or the next but those who insult the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven in either state. Thus you can be damned even in this life though you may feel you are for Heaven! The Holy Spirit's job is to connect you to God so being in a false religion that is far from the truth about love and God is blaspheming the Holy Spirit in the sense of following religion instead of God.

Anyway if the text backs up Purgatory as Catholics want to think, could it mean that those who insult the Holy Spirit will be in Purgatory forever? Why not? You can be in rehab for years even if nobody thinks it is working! So why not forever?

PURGATORY IS ANTI-BIBLICAL

The doctrine of Purgatory is at variance with the Bible. It is an invention of the Roman Catholic Church which borrowed it from paganism.

It appears that the only praying for the dead that the early Church did was so that Jesus would come soon and raise them up (page 4, Purgatory, Rev W E Kenny BD). Augustine said no more about Purgatory than that some in his day believed in it and that he would not argue against it for it might be true (De civitate Dei, lib. XXI. C. 25). This tells us that Purgatory was not in Christian tradition when all it could get was a maybe. Augustine would have thought that if it did exist it was not something that was meant to be revealed or declared revealed by God and yet the Church declared it revealed by God in the second millenium. Pope St Gregory the Great liked the idea of Purgatory and gave it his sanction in his The Dialogues about 590 AD. Gregory based his faith in Purgatory on stories about visions of the dead. He was the first to teach it. Catholics deny this saying that if he had just plucked this new doctrine out of nowhere there would have been schisms and brutal protests but there were not so it was believed by the Church all the time anyway. But there were several bizarre doctrines in the Church that were tolerated. In those days, Christians fought over serious disagreements on the divinity of Christ and the Trinity. Purgatory never became a dogma that had to be believed until 1438, the year of the Council of Florence. It and the doctrine of the need to make atonement for the dead were made infallible dogma at Florence and later Trent.

The Gospel of John says that he who believes in the Son will be saved and he who does not will be condemned. If belief in the Son means to boldly take the Son and adhere to him as

Biblical Christianity says, it follows that Purgatory is asking us to keep away from him and so brings us under the condemnation.

The thief must have had a lot of atoning to do and yet Jesus told him he would be in Paradise that very day (Luke 23:43). Some Catholics say that Purgatory is an instant nuclear blast of pain so it could be over in seconds or a few hours but is as bad as a lifetime of pain. That gets around this verse and the others which say it is better to be dead to be with God. Or does it? It implies that the suffering is not for purification but for retribution only. The nuclear blast idea is bringing in a new miracle to get around this verse. If you start doing that you will never interpret anything properly. For example, if the Bible said that the earth was the only planet you would end up saying that when the author wrote that it was true and the Lord made more planets since. You will end up gullible.

The Church says that those who have died in the Lord could be resting because they are out of Purgatory (Revelation 14:13). But this is not a straightforward interpretation.

Paul was clear that us sinful people with faulty bodies would rise up into the air to meet the returning Jesus and be turned into holy beings with eternal life and glorified saved bodies and hearts. He stressed it would happen in an instant.

possibly if Jesus can change us so easily he is to blame for what Hitler did he didn't he change him? It implies that sin is some kind of legal fiction not a real malice if it can be dealt with like a deep quick clean.

Paul said in Philippians 1:23 that it would be better for him to die and leave this world to be with Christ. Catholics say that this would only be true if you died getting a plenary indulgence for if you had to go to Purgatory you would have been better off not dying at all for it is awful. There is no trace of indulgences in the New Testament and modern Catholics admit that they were created by the Church centuries after the New Testament was created and are disciplinary things that follow from the vicarious merit and Purgatory doctrines. Paul then did not believe in Purgatory for he expected leaving this world to bring him home to Jesus. He kept denigrating himself for his sins and called himself the worst sinner so he did not think that there was a Purgatory but he was too good to go to it. He would not boast for he forbade boasting, all the time.

Philippians 1:21 says that the death of a saint is gain. The Catholic Church says Purgatory is gain when it ensures that you will never be damned forever. This is mistaken because suffering on earth is better than suffering in Purgatory for it is milder. Also suffering on earth is meritorious and suffering in Purgatory is not. It is because there is no merit there that the souls have to suffer there to the end if nobody makes sacrifices for them. And the verse definitely has the idea of escaping suffering on earth by going to Heaven in mind. That is real gain. It makes no sense for Paul to want us to be free from suffering on earth if worse could face us after death. A bit later we read that to die is good for it will mean being with Christ which implies in its simplest sense that the dead who are saved go to Christ and not to Purgatory which is only a stop on the way to Christ. In this context, verse 21 does succeed in refuting Purgatory. Paul's stress on humility means he wouldn't have dared assume he would go straight to Heaven and none of the canonised saints did that for they believed their tiny sins were extremely bad and abhorrent.

God hates the holy souls if they have no venial sin and are only in Purgatory to pay back the debt of temporal punishment. There is something terribly amiss in a system that says you can get rid of venial sins quicker than all the punishment due to them. Logic says the sin should be the slowest to be cancelled for it is worse. Sin attacks a good God while punishment is your come-uppance. The souls would repent upon arrival for to stay in sin is a sin and there is no sin in Purgatory except what is lying on the soul from earth-life. If somebody forgives you for breaking their precious vase and still asks you to pay then the paying is temporal punishment. But the person needs the payment and God who is all-powerful does not. He does not ask for it to discipline us for the need for discipline does not require unnecessary demands. God does not forgive at all. He just lessens the punishment – he partially rewards or condones the crime which is evil. God hates the souls in Purgatory and they are not purified when they are becoming closer to such a hateful being. This aspect of Purgatory also exposes the malevolence of the doctrine.

The doctrine of temporal punishment gives no backing for Purgatory for temporal punishment is impossible to really believe. Even if it were not nonsense Jesus could atone for any that remains to be paid at death.

When a person is in Purgatory God is saying, "Keep away from me for you are impure and I am perfect." In that case, the notion of God indwelling and having a relationship with venial sinners on earth and the holy souls in Purgatory is lies. If God is able to mystically unite with a venial sinner then he can let that person into Heaven sins and all for the only difference is that in Heaven you know that God exists and you sense him with your sight and other senses but you don't experience him like that on earth. But the most important thing, having God in your heart is common to both. The interior union or fellowship is the essential thing. It makes no sense to say that God unites with you intimately and then that you can't see him in Heaven for seeing him is less important. So, the Purgatory doctrine is really insulting God and is denying that he dwells inside you. The Bible says that if God is not inside you in the sense of having a right relationship with you then you are not saved (Romans 8:9). Catholics are enemies of Jesus Christ and not real Christians.

The Roman Church claims that if you go to Purgatory, you are still in the Church. The Church says that the one true Church is made up of the people who are in Heaven. the members of the Catholic Church on earth and those who are in Purgatory. It calls this doctrine the communion of saints. What if there is no Purgatory? Rome reasons that there is probably more Catholics in Purgatory than there is on earth. So a branch of the Church that is more important in numbers and holiness than the Church on earth doesn't exist. The Church then cannot be the true Church. It is like claiming to be a member of the largest Church in the universe when the other members are supposed to be on non-existent planets. There is no Church at all never mind a true one! A Church that has non-existent members is not the true Church and cannot be guaranteed to teach without error.

Rome calls itself Catholic in view of being allegedly open to all nations and all people and being spread out over earth and in Purgatory and Heaven. If there is no purgatory then how could the Church be Catholic when there is no Purgatory for it to be in? The Catholicity of the Church depends on the existence of Purgatory. It is a grave sin then for a believer who knows this to support or affiliate with the Catholic Church.

The Bible teaches that salvation has been earned for us in full by Jesus and that all we have to do is believe and accept what Jesus did for us. This is salvation by faith alone. Tradition in the Clementine literature complains about Simon Magus

teaching this doctrine. Simon Magus is a nickname the literature gave St Paul and has Simon and Peter contending in Rome without mentioning Paul indicating that Simon was what they were calling Paul. They couldn't name Paul for the bigger Church regarded him as a true apostle despite warping some of his teachings. Purgatory contradicts the idea that good works and holiness contribute nothing to your salvation.

Paul in Ephesians 2:8,9 says that we are saved by grace through faith and not of ourselves or our works. It says works not earnings. It would say earnings if it just tried to correct the notion that you can earn salvation. It is uttered to people who were saved some time before so the author is telling them that they are still justified by faith without good works. He is not saying you are saved by faith and repentance at the start and then after this gift and fresh start you have to work for your salvation. This seems to attack Purgatory. But even those who believe in salvation by faith alone still think that the purpose of earth-life is to improve the Christian and purge them from their sinful faults. So Ephesians does eliminate the idea of a Purgatory in which you earn your salvation or work for it. It eliminates the idea of a Purgatory where you have to make up for venial sin and atone for it. But it does not eliminate the idea of a Purgatory that is for making the saved behave better. It certainly eliminates the Catholic doctrine that you go to Purgatory to make up for sin. Catholics ask that when there is a Purgatory for Christians on earth then why can't there be one after our time in this world? But this Purgatory would have to be for discipline not punishment while the Catholic purgatory is more about punishment than discipline. For example, the Church gives indulgences. Just kissing a relic can result in the whole punishment being cancelled by an indulgence and nobody thinks doing that counts as discipline and self-mastery. The indulgences do not discipline the sinner. Far from it. They remove, or at least reduce the amount of, the punishment you are due from God. So indulgences contradict the view that Purgatory is merely for discipline for they dispense you from the need to discipline yourself.

The Bible teaching of salvation by faith only infers that there can be no such place as a Purgatory that is for atoning sin.

Purgatory is based on the immoral idea that Jesus made enough atonement for all people but still expects people to atone for their own sins to a certain extent. That is ludicrous and unjust. Yet it is imagined to be supported in Colossians (1:24) where we are told that Paul tries to suffer for what is lacking in the sufferings of Jesus for the Church. But the line before and after speak of Paul being a minister so what he means is that Jesus did not preach the gospel in his suffering so somebody else has to suffer to do that.

Only false doctrine can be built on a foundation of error.

BAD BIBLE ANTI-PURGATORY ARGUMENTS

Here are some bad disproofs of Purgatory.

Isaiah 1:18 says that God will make scarlet sins as white as snow. That is sometimes quoted to disprove Purgatory but perhaps God does the bleaching job in Purgatory? Against this it is said that Isaiah's readers would have understood it to refer to purification in this life so that is what it means. The immediate readership determines the intended interpretation.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 says that the spirit goes back to God after death.

But the spirit could go back through Purgatory. When a child goes back to the shop after school it does not mean that she will not stop at the chapel on the way.

Spirit here means breath so there is nothing metaphysical in this verse.

Jesus did not say Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom immediately after death (Luke 16:22).

1 John 1:7,9 says that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. This does not refute Purgatory for it is about cleansing us from all past and present sin. We could be without sin but just need some discipline in Purgatory. But this verse certainly refutes the Catholic doctrine that Purgatory is primarily about punishing us for sin and we have to be punished there to be free.

In Ephesians 3:15 we read that all families in Heaven and on earth take their names from the Father. Purgatory is not mentioned and this is thought to prove that there is no such place. Unlike Hell where there is no love, there should be families in Purgatory unless each person is in solitary confinement. So it might not disprove Purgatory at all.

Revelation 14:13 says that the dead who die in the Lord are blessed for their works follow them. That could be referring to those who have no need of Purgatory. If Purgatory was a nuclear blast of pain that lasts only say a minute this verse could still be true.

Purgatory is a Catholic invention and is against the Bible.

