

SAINTS ARE HAPPY IN HEAVEN WHILE PEOPLE ROAST IN HELL!!

The Christian faith is reluctant to admit that it thinks your happiness in heaven is made better by the thought that your wife and child are roasting in Hell. It hopes you will enjoy that! In fact if there is a Hell, believing such a thing is guaranteed to put you in it!

Jesus said virtually nothing clear about Heaven. And he didn't seem to like the subject. But he spoke a lot about Hell. Believers say it was to warn us. But warning aside, why concentrate so much on it? Was Jesus in fact enjoying the subject? Surely attracting people to Heaven is even more important than warning them about Hell? Hell is believed to be everlasting punishment and agony. It is that Jesus talks about. The doctrine that sin continues in Hell forever and Hell is the place where sin happens forever is never mentioned. A true warning would be concerned about how Hell is the free embrace of eternal evil. Jesus' warnings about the agony are odd in the light of his doctrine that we must love God in freedom and spontaneously. We are to love God for God and not because we want to avoid punishment. The man regarded as an early Pope, Clement, in the second letter of Clement, gloats about people suffering in Hell. A popular text that hoped to get into the New Testament, the Apocalypse of Peter revelled in the torments of the people trapped in Hell. Modern Catholicism enables and tolerates the doctrine of St Thomas Aquinas that part of the pleasure of Heaven is seeing how people suffer in Hell.

The whole New Testament is supposedly divinely inspired. But only the Book of Revelation claims that the author collaborated directly with Jesus to produce it. This book teaches that Hell is not the absence of God and Jesus for the damned are tormented in their presence (Revelation 14:10-11). God is present with them to torment them - perhaps it is like being exposed to a sun that is too bright and hot for you.

THE EXCUSES:

The notion that the saints are happy in spite of knowing what people suffer there is problematic for that suggests something is forcing them not to react badly or they are deluded about how real their happiness is. The in spite of implies they should be horrified but are not.

The saints do not know about the suffering or remember that they ever heard of hell.

The saints suffer to see the damned suffer.

The saints will that the damned be free from suffering and released but they have no feelings for God protects them from being sad. They love them but they do not suffer at their suffering.

God forces the saints to hate the damned and enjoy seeing them suffer.

God allows the saints to freely hate the damned and gloat.

The other difficulty is, how can a truly good person ON EARTH be happy to worship God and love their faith when they believe or think they know that people go to Hell forever?

THE EXCUSES REFUTED

Many Christians have always being bothered as to how people can be happy in Heaven while their relatives, young children and friends scream for relief while none comes, in the tortuous flames of the Pit of Hell forever. Many sceptics see a contradiction here. Sadly the Christian leaders are never bothered enough to abandon their faith as man-made nonsense.

Christians contrive a number of "solutions". The Church believes that hell is a madhouse (see the chapter on Hell in the Handbook of Christian Apologetics). The quick answer to them all is: "Church doctrine says that sin is insanity for we sinners think our sin is good. We are wrong for we cannot chose what is evil in itself. We are only attracted by the good we see in the evil thing. So sin is insanity therefore they and we should weep and feel for the damned. So if there is a Hell there is no Heaven or at least no Heaven that is any better than Hell. If the saints are happy they are evil."

How can you be a saint and be happy in spite of knowing what the damned endure? And what if you realise - which you will - that being happy in spite of their agony is abnormal and twisted.

The Church says that whoever rejects God or his Church is in fact rejecting a caricature for they are so wonderful and attractive. It follows then that the damned don't make a choice against God at all but against a caricature of him. Whatever a Christian can say, they cannot say that Hell exists because God respects free will and the freedom of a person to reject him. Christians don't believe that Hell is a doctrine that respects free will at all for they are the ones saying that God is never rejected but only a mockery of him is. They use an excuse to justify Hell that they don't believe in - they are a lot more vindictive than they pretend. If they have to lie to justify the doctrine then the saints must do this as well!

The apostles were brought before the Jewish courts and charged with slandering the Jewish leaders. The apostles were saying that the Jews had crucified Jesus. Acts 5 says that the apostles were delighted and pleased to have had the honour of suffering humiliation in the name of Jesus. Note that they did not say they were glad because the maltreatment would have some good results but it was the humiliation and the suffering they enjoyed. If people are allowed to enjoy their own pain, then they can enjoy seeing others suffer too! And especially if the other people are in Hell forever!

* THE SAINTS DO NOT KNOW ABOUT THE SUFFERING OR REMEMBER THAT THEY EVER HEARD OF HELL.

God cannot remove the awareness of the saints that there are people who are in Hell for that would involve deleting any remembrance of life on earth. If God takes it away then there was no point in them having a life on earth. He would be extremely vicious and uncaring if he put people in this vale of tears only to make it as if they weren't here at all, later. To draw them to forget how they got their virtues is to make them lose the virtues. The Book of Revelation represents the saints as being aware of the suffering of others (19). If the saints know nothing of the damned now then there is no purpose for damnation. You only talk about mysterious purposes when you talk about people.

* THE SAINTS SUFFER TO SEE THE DAMNED SUFFER.

Then Heaven is as much perpetual torment as Hell is. When the saints are so good they must suffer as much as the damned suffer at the thought of them suffering. Why go to Heaven in that case?

The view that the saints are happy and that this doesn't mean they don't also suffer at the same time to think of the suffering of the damned is advanced by JP Moreland in the notorious *The Case for Faith* page 259 (Lee Strobel, HarperCollins, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2000). There it is said that maturity enables the saints to hold the two feelings at the same time.

This assumes several things. JP Moreland holds that the Bible alone is the supreme doctrinal authority and the only sure voice of God so his theory is unacceptable if it undermines it or adds to it. And it does fit the Bible which speaks of saints in the Book of Revelation begging God to avenge sins.

He says that they are able to handle the grief because they know that the damned chose Hell and because God had to respect their dignity and their choice they had to go there. So they understand and this eases their pain. But does a person cutting their limbs off mean you are entitled not to care because they are doing it to themselves? One major point about caring is that you suffer if people make the wrong choices. Otherwise there is little or no point.

The Bible never says that God lets people go to Hell to respect their dignity. It may be that he has to degrade them for one of his mysterious purposes and the Bible continually declares the mystery of God's providence and his ways.

Moreland says that Hell is not a torture chamber (page 241). People who go there reject God and this rejection is so awful that it affects their bodies so they suffer physically but they are the cause of their suffering not God (page 243). So people torture themselves there willingly out of rejection of God but it is not a divine torture chamber. So in short, the damned reject the source of happiness, God, and the result is a loneliness and a sense of failure that is more than they can bear but which they have to face forever.

He argues that it is not a torture chamber because everything that happens to the damned in Hell is their own creation. He says that the fire of hell spoken of in the Bible was never meant to be taken literally because Hell is described in it as utter darkness and you can't have such darkness where you have such great flames (page 245).

First of all, how does he know it is the utter darkness that is literal and not the fire? Why doesn't he say that the utter darkness is what is not literal because flames give light? When Jesus described Hell most often as a fire it would follow that the fire had the best chance of being meant literally. And the vast majority of Christians since Jesus' time did take hellfire literally so why couldn't Jesus have meant it literally?

Jesus described Hell as fire but God can make a fire that doesn't give off light or maybe he just cloaks the light so nobody

can see it.

Jesus described the damned as being sent into the fire or everlasting fire as eternal punishment.

God respecting the choice of the damned to freely suffer and reject him forever is not punishing them but honoring them in the Moreland theology though he doesn't see that. He says Hell is punishment only in the sense that God can't make them happy when they refuse his kindness which is absurd. And they are not punishing themselves – you don't punish yourself for drinking by getting a hangover. They hate God and are not intending to punish themselves. God is punishing and torturing them.

If Moreland is right that Hell is just a metaphor for the loneliness of having given up God forever then what did Jesus need a metaphor for? Why didn't he restrict himself to saying it was endless loneliness? The answer is that the fire even if it is symbolic makes it clear that Hell is indeed a torture chamber. The fire if symbolic pictures the pain of burning. The metaphor doctrine is nowhere in the Bible. Hell is a torture chamber and it seems God tortures there and lets the damned and the demons torment each other.

Moreland's attempts to deny that Hell is a torture chamber in the sense that God tortures people there. What we must remember is that is only his interpretation – and we can disagree if we want. He believes that it is a state which there is no escape but which is rather a state of unending loneliness which God doesn't want to happen even to the damned but which they choose for themselves. This is what a Christian is obligated to believe. He would tell you that you must believe that when you die rebellious to God you have to go to Hell to suffer forever and there is no hope for the Bible says that but you don't have to believe his interpretation. So we are free then to accept or reject the torture chamber interpretation. To make people free to believe such an evil and vindictive doctrine proves that Hell is an evil and vindictive doctrine!

The motive behind attempts to show that Hell is not a torture chamber is to butter people up because modern society sees torture as immoral. It is strange to argue that the loneliness is unimaginable and then to have a problem with Hell being a place of torture. It is hypocritical.

In summary, Hell is a torture chamber and there is no way the saints could bear to see the suffering of the damned. The only option is for them to gloat and wish they could make a trip to Hell just to increase the torments of the damned.

*** THE SAINTS WILL THAT THE DAMNED BE FREE FROM SUFFERING AND RELEASED BUT THEY HAVE NO FEELINGS FOR GOD PROTECTS THEM FROM BEING SAD. THEY LOVE THEM BUT THEY DO NOT SUFFER AT THEIR SUFFERING.**

The obvious error in this is the assumption that you can will something without feeling. You cannot. The will is a kind of feeling. It is a feeling itself and just works in a different way from the way your emotions work. The world defines the will as, "I will is equal to I want to choose." Want means desire.

The saints will the salvation of the damned and that must be a bit painful. Even if they don't care about the damned now but wish the damned had done better when they had the chance when they were alive on earth before it was too late that is still painful for the saints. The saints have a penalty of eternal punishment too at its mildest. But if they really don't care then they are evil and Heaven is a den of vice.

The Christians say that "the saints approve of the damned getting their just deserts and no more and that they miraculously cannot feel distressed about what is happening to them. The saints do not will the damned to sin but they are supernaturally prevented from feeling hatred for sin for that would take away their happiness and is no good to them. The Christians preach that it is not a sin for God to make the saints so unemotional and cold in the face of sin and suffering because he needs to make them happy. Jesus said that people become like angels in Heaven (Mark 12:25). They don't feel the way they did on earth. There is no contradiction between the saints knowing that there is a Hell and being happy and loving the damned."

God must be doing something to the damned to make sure they don't decide one day they have had enough and leave and go to Heaven. Why else would they all stay there? The saints cannot will that the damned repent and be free of Hell for God holds them captive in Hell and to make such a wish is to impugn his perfection. It is a sin.

The saints cannot love the damned as if they never sinned. That would be blessing the sins by pretending that they never did them. Or that the sin was something alien that attached itself to them and not caused by them. This would be pretending that the sin is not part of the sinner. That would not be loving them at all for it is willing the encouragement of the evil of sin and sin is bad for the sinner when it is to be hated. To love the sinner and not the sin is to pretend that the sinner has had nothing to do with the sin which is hardly loving or sincere. Even if you separate the sinner from the sin and fight the sin the attitude is not right and you are still not off the hook for being a hypocrite.

The other way it is put, “Love the sinner for see the whole person and not just the hateful sin which is only a small part of them”, denies the obvious fact that once you sin you can’t do real good and all is sin. For example, if I sin I am ungrateful to God. I am saying, “I want to do good if I want to and not because you want it God or because it is good.” So any good you do reflects your attitude and is sinful. It is actually worse to do good in a state of sin than to do harm for the person who pretends to love is worse than the one who brazenly hates for such hate is its own punishment and is less selfish. The only sense in which they can love them is by willing what will make them repent which can be done even if it is known by them that they never will. But since God has put them in Hell this is sinful unless he couldn’t do anything other than that.

The modern Church following Christ says the saints must love the damned for you have to love your enemies but hate their sins instead of hating them. But this love isn’t really love at all as we have seen. If you would reward the sins you are pleased with the punishing that they bring on themselves and are really rejoicing in it. Your sorrow would be just masochism.

Compassion is about suffering with the suffering though you don't have to. It is feeling for somebody whose suffering even if down to a bad past choice and committing yourself to working with them to help them. It is about their suffering not how they came to suffer even if that it self-inflicted. That is why if the damned put themselves in Hell through one final choice they are in fact entitled to more compassion not less. Their situation is the worst one.

* GOD FORCES THE SAINTS TO HATE THE DAMNED AND ENJOY SEEING THEM SUFFER.

Christians insist that the saints do not freely hate the damned for the person is absolutely precious and so hatred is always wrong except when it cannot be helped. They would insist that people who think that the saints are sadists who enjoy seeing the damned suffer are forgetting that the saints may be enjoying God but feeling no sorrow over the damned. But many believers insist that God hates the damned and wants the saints to hate them too. Hate is not a pleasant feeling. The believers would answer that the hatred in the saints is enjoyable for they gloat.

If you are forced to hate then it is not a sin. God may be compelled to cause the saints to hate the damned and laugh at their suffering in order to make the saints happy. Therefore, the saints hating the damned would be ineffective as proof against Hell. It would be a necessary evil. But the problem for some is if you are forced to love or hate then the result is just a mime and not real love or hate. But emotionally it is love or hate. Feelings do not follow logic.

If God forces the saints to feel hate then why not force them to feel love which would be a more moral feeling? The thought that the Lord implants by force feelings of hatred and gloating in the saints denies the goodness of God. If forcing the saints gets them off the hook it does not get God off it for he is as bad as hating the damned himself when he freely makes the saints hate.

The view that the saints hate the damned fits our knowledge that the doctrine of love the sinner and hate the sin which I have thoroughly exposed as a sickly sweet sham that has nothing to do with love at all.

* GOD ALLOWS THE SAINTS TO FREELY HATE THE DAMNED AND GLOAT.

The saints will be happy when they are with God. They will be happier if they revel in the misfortune of the damned. The view that the saints have to choose to delight in the suffering of the damned to be happy is almost universally rejected by theologians (but nearly universally accepted in popular Christianity) for it implies that God is incompetent in bringing happiness to them. If God is good then being with him must produce amazing happiness. The view then that they have to rejoice in the agony of the damned to be happier so they have no choice but to gloat makes no sense. It is no excuse.

This is different from the previous because here the saints revel in spite freely and unnecessarily. The happiness of hatred is just an excuse for the saints’ evil.

Hell is purposeless and if God sends people there then he expects his friends to gloat and celebrate. The Christian Church speaks of Hell as eternal loss.

What business have the Christians wailing about our assertion that there is no justifiable purpose for Hell when they themselves acclaim Hell and its purposeless?

If people need to be damned for the saints' good, God could have worked out his purpose by damning nobody but by setting up an illusionary Hell. The saints would be too wrapped up in God and there would be so many people in Heaven and with family and friendship ties ended (Mark 12:25) that they would not notice if the should-be-damned were in Heaven and they could be put in different departments to keep the secret. So God wants the saints to really hate the real damned if Hell is real for he unnecessarily torments them. This is evil for it is better to hate an illusionary person you think is real than it is to

hate a real person. God hates the damned and would make the saints hate them too.

A process of elimination shows that hate and gloating is the only course if people are known by you to be in Hell. It shows that each excuse is itself a gloat.