

# OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES

by

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### HAMARTIOLOGY

#### TOPIC ONE: THE ORIGIN OF SIN

The origin of sin is wrapped in obscurity. It is one of the unrevealed mysteries of Scripture. We are, however, given a hint of the entrance of sin into the heart of Satan and also the introduction of sin into the human race.

##### I. THE ENTRANCE OF SIN INTO THE HEART OF SATAN

1. In Isaiah 14:12-17, in the picture of the fall of Lucifer, son of the morning (the king of Babylon, vs. 4), we have an account; it is believed, of the rebellion of Satan against God. Notice the expression “**I will**,” five times repeated—especially the last instance: “**I will be like the most High**,” vs. 14.

2. Again in Ezekiel 28, in the prophet’s lamentation upon the king of Tyre, we have a hint, it is believed, that Satan fell by reason of pride of heart, vs. 17.

##### II. THE INTRODUCTION OF SIN INTO THE HUMAN RACE

The introduction of sin into the human race is recorded in the third chapter of Genesis and in other scriptures. It came about in a fourfold way.

1. **Through deception.** See I Timothy 2:14.
2. **Through man’s disobedience.** See Romans 5:19.
3. **Through the serpent’s enticement.** See Genesis 3:1-6.
4. **Through Satan’s malignity.** See Revelation 12:9.

#### TOPIC TWO: THE REALITY OF SIN

Sin is a sad and terrible reality. This fact may be proved in three ways, namely: the teaching of Scripture, the testimony of mankind, and the witness of consciousness.

## **I. THE TEACHING OF SCRIPTURE**

As to the reality of sin the teaching of Scripture is clear and unmistakable. Among a multitude of passages take but three:

1. John 1:29: “**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**”
2. Romans 3:23: “**For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.**”
3. Galatians 3:22: “**But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin that the promise by faith might be given to all them that believe.**”

## **II. THE TESTIMONY OF MANKIND**

The testimony of mankind as to the reality of sin has been enacted into government legislation, has found recognition in every false religion, and is reflected in secular literature.

Listen:

1. The Roman philosopher Seneca said: “We have all sinned, some more, and some less.”
2. The Roman Ovid wrote: “We all strive for what is forbidden.”
3. The German philosopher and poet Goethe confessed: “I see no fault in others which I myself might not have committed.”
4. A Chinese proverb runs: “There are two good men: one is dead and the other is not yet born.”

## **III. THE WITNESS OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

Consciousness gives no uncertain witness to the reality of sin. Everyone knows he is a sinner. No one of responsible years has ever lived free from the sense of personal guilt and moral defilement.

Remorse of conscience for wrong-doing hounds all the sons and daughters of Adam; while the sad and terrible consequences of sin are seen in the physical, mental, and moral deterioration and degeneration of the race.

## **TOPIC THREE: THE NATURE OF SIN**

### **I. WHAT SIN IS NOT**

#### **1. Sin is not an Accident.**

There are those who hold that sin is an accident; but, as we have seen, the teaching of the Bible is that sin resulted from an act of responsible disobedience on the part of Adam: Romans 5:19.

#### **2. Sin is not Infirmity.**

There are those who hold that sin is a kind of disease, because of which we are very unfortunate but in no wise culpable. But this, like the former view, is contrary to the revelation of the Bible.

### 3. Sin is not a Negation.

That sin is a negation is the teaching of Christian Science—that evil is the absence of good, and sin is the absence of righteousness. But the Word of God declares sin and evil to have a positive existence and to be an offense to the Lord: Psalm 51:4.

### 4. Sin is not “an Amiable Weakness.”

In order to find excuse for their wicked indulgences, there are those who hold that sin is “an amiable weakness.” But sin is not pitiable but blameworthy, and the sinner is responsibly guilty before God.

### 5. Sin is not a Necessity.

Fatalism teaches that sin is a necessity and that while sin is of the nature of responsible personal guilt, yet we cannot escape it and consequently must make the best of it. There are indeed many Christians who practically maintain that sin is a means of grace. The old extreme Calvinistic view of sanctification was that death alone can free us from sin. Yet the clear and emphatic teaching of the New Testament is that the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse us from all sin: I John 1:7.

## II. WORDS FOR SIN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

### 1. The most common word for sin signifies literally to miss the mark.

In the original sense it is found in Judges 20:16: “**Among all this people there were seven hundred chosen men left-handed; every one could sling stones at a hair breadth, and not miss.**” With its derivative forms this word means any moral deviation from the divine goal—a going beyond, a coming short, or a falling aside. Not only willful and ignorant acts of sin but also evil states and wicked dispositions of the mind and heart are included within the scope of this Hebrew word: Genesis 4:7; Exodus 9:27; Leviticus 5:1; Numbers 6:11; Psalm 51:2, 4; Proverbs 8:36; Isaiah 42:24; Hosea 4:7.

**2. Bent or twisted, or crooked** (Isaiah 21:3), and spiritually means moral perverseness or iniquity,—“the distortion of nature caused by evil doing.” Our English word wrong, i. e., that which is wrung out of its true course, exactly expresses the idea. Not so much the act itself but the character of the act is in the force of this Hebrew word: Genesis 15:16; Psalm 32:5; Isaiah 5:18.

**3. Stormy excitement, means the habit of evil;** that is, sin particularly in the disposition. It is the opposite of righteousness: Leviticus 19:15, 35; Job 3:17; 16:11; 20:29; 34:8; Psalm 82:2; Proverbs 16:12; Isaiah 57:20, 21; Malachi 2:6.

**4. A revolt against rightful authority; that is, apostasy or rebellion.** It is commonly translated by “**transgression**”: Psalm 51:3; Proverbs 28:2.

5. **To cross over a line, or go beyond.** It is usually rendered by “**transgress**”: Psalm 17:3; Hosea 6:7; 8:1.
6. **To blow**, represents sin in the aspect of vanity or nothingness: Isaiah 41:29.
7. **The hardness of the heart**—the highest degree of sin; stubbornness, or obduracy: Exodus 4:21.

But the Hebrew words that are translated sin, or mean sin in one form or another, are far too numerous to be considered separately. However, among those that remain these may be mentioned—fault, Genesis 41:9; transgress, or sin through ignorance, Leviticus 4:13; wander, Ezekiel 34:6; err, Psalm 119:21; hate, Leviticus 19:17; mischief, Psalm 94:20; misery, Proverbs 31:7; etc., etc.

### III. WORDS FOR SIN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. **It is remarkable that in the New Testament Greek, as well as in the Old Testament Hebrew, the most common word for sin signifies “to miss the mark.”** It is said to occur not less than 174 times, 71 times in the Pauline epistles. It expresses the state or disposition of evil as well as the act of sin: Romans 3:23; 5-12.
2. **Overpassing or overstepping of a line of duty.** It is always used of the “violation of a positive law, an express precept with an express sanction”: I Timothy 2:14.
3. **A failure**—a falling where one should have stood: Galatians 6:1. This Greek word is variously rendered, viz: trespass, Matthew 6:14; sins, Ephesians 1:7; faults, James 5:16.
4. **Lawlessness or anarchy:** I John 3:4,
5. **Ignorance of what should have been known:** Hebrews 9:7.
6. **The diminishing of that which one should have rendered in full:** I Corinthians 6:7.
7. **Disobedience to a voice:** Hebrews 2:2, 3.
8. **A debt or an offense:** Matthew 6:12.

Instances of other words in the New Testament, which describe various forms of sin, are: ungodliness, unrighteousness, Romans 1:18; lust, Romans 1:24; fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, deceit, malignity, murder, Romans 1:29, 30; enmity, Romans 8:7; flesh, adultery, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, drunkenness, revellings, Galatians 5:19-21; evil speaking, bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, malice, Ephesians 4:31, etc., etc.

### IV. SCRIPTURE DEFINITIONS OF SIN

There are in the Scriptures a number of descriptive definitions of sin, of which the following are the more striking:

1. Proverbs 21:4: “**An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin.**”

2. Proverbs 24:9: **“The thought of foolishness is sin.”** The word thought here has the force of premeditation.
3. John 16:8, 9: **“And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me.”**
4. Romans 14:23: **“For whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”**
5. James 4:17: **“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”**
6. I John 3:4: **“For sin is the transgression of the law”**—in act, disposition, or state.
7. I John 5:17: **“All unrighteousness is sin.”**

## **V. THEOLOGICAL DEFINITIONS OF SIN**

The following definitions of sin are based on the Scriptures:

- 1. Sin is the transgression of, or lack of conformity to, the law of God.**
- 2. Sin is inordinate desire or concupiscence.**
- 3. Sin is deficiency of love to God and man.**
- 4. Sin is preference of self to God.**
- 5. Sin is insubordination.**
- 6. Sin is lack of conformity to God or His moral law in act, disposition, or state.**

**NOTE:** In distinction from those who hold sin to be sensuousness or finiteness, Dr. Strong maintains that its essential principle is selfishness, i. e., self-ness. This is in agreement with the fourth definition given above.

## **VI. SUMMARY OF SCRIPTURE TEACHING. CONCERNING SIN**

A careful review of the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the nature of sin discloses the fact that sin may be viewed in four aspects, namely: towards God, towards the divine law, towards man, and towards self.

### **A. Towards God.**

Sin is either rebellion or failure to love God supremely.

#### **1. Rebellion.**

**“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry”:** I Samuel 15:23.

#### **2. Failure to love Him supremely.**

**“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might”:** Deuteronomy 6:5. See Mark 12:30.

## **B. Towards the Divine Law.**

Sin is either willful transgression or violation through ignorance.

### **1. Willful transgression.**

**“But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously (lit. *with a high hand*) whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people”:** Numbers 15:30. See Psalm 19:13.

### **2. Violation through ignorance.**

**“And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering”:** Numbers 15:27; Hebrews 9:7/

## **C. Towards Man.**

Sin is either injustice or failure to love him as one’s self.

### **1. Injustice.**

**“Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him; the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning”:** Leviticus 19:13. See Micah 6:8; Romans 1:18.

### **2. Failure to love him as one’s self.**

**“But thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself”:** Leviticus 19:18. See Mark 12:31.

## **D. Towards Self.**

Sin is either selfishness (selfness) or corruption.

### **1. Selfishness (self-ness).**

**“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me”:** Matthew 16:24. See John 12:25.

### **2. Corruption.**

**“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me”:** Psalm 51:5. See Romans 7:18.

## **TOPIC FOUR: THE EXTENT OF SIN**

As to the extent of sin, the Scriptures teach that it is universal; that is, it has affected some part of heaven and its inhabitants, and the whole of earth and its inhabitants.

## I. THE HEAVENS

The sin and fall of Satan affected the heavens. As we have seen (see topic Satan under Angelology), the devil himself has access to heaven: Job 1:6; Zechariah 3:1; Luke 10:18; Revelation 12:7-9. Moreover, the emissaries of Satan infest the heavenly places, where they make warfare with the believer: Ephesians 1:3; 2:6; 6:11, 12.

## II. THE EARTH

The sin and fall of our first parents affected the whole of earth and its inhabitants.

**1. The vegetable kingdom.** This has been cursed because of man's sin, but will be restored in the Millennial age: Genesis 3:17, 18; Isaiah 55:13.

**2. The animal kingdom.** This suffers in consequence of man's sin, but will be made to share in the peace and glory of the Millennium: Isaiah 11:6-9.

**3. The race of mankind.** Sin has affected and infected the entire race of mankind (For fuller treatment, see next topic: the result of sin, i. e. in man). Dr. Farr says: "Both Scripture and experience justify the statement, that with the single exception of Jesus Christ all men are morally depraved at birth, and if they live long in the world, are found guilty of personal sin. By moral depravity is meant that state of the soul which naturally leads to sin."

**NOTE:** Speaking of the universality of sin Dr. Farr further says: "Sin and salvation both begin in heaven and come from heaven to earth. Much of Christ's work is performed in and for the heavens: Hebrews 9:23. The intimate relation of heaven and earth is seen in Genesis 1:1. Man is destined for heaven as well as for earth: I Corinthians 15:49. Christ comes from, ascends to, and returns from heaven. Heaven is always mentioned first, as ruling the earth. The new heaven and the new earth are the result of Christ's work of redemption: Isaiah 65:17; II Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1."

## TOPIC FIVE: THE RESULT OF SIN

Universal is the extent of sin, and likewise universal are its devastating and death-dealing results. Two spheres in particular may be mentioned, viz: the earth and man.

### I. THE EARTH

As to the result of sin in the earth, two things may be specified, namely:

**1. The groaning of creation:** Romans 8:19-23.

In this passage Paul reveals the close connection between man and the lower creation.

Sin has brought the lower creation into “**the bondage of corruption,**” but full redemption for man will bring about its complete deliverance: vs. 21.

**NOTE:** It is said that every sound produced by nature is in the minor key, speaking of the tragedy of sin and suffering— the sighing of the wind, the rustling of the leaves, the chirping of the birds, the murmuring of the brook, etc. On the other hand, the major key speaks of redemption and joy. It is struck now wherever and whenever the work of the Holy Spirit is unhindered, but it will be the dominant note during the Millennium and throughout the ages of the new heaven and the new earth.

**2. The emptiness of creation:** Numbers 14:21; Psalm 90:13; Hosea 5:15; Romans 8:20.

Dr. F. L. Chapell says: “Since the creation was for the indwelling of God, angels and men, who are the higher forms of creation in heaven and earth, must be subordinate to God for His indwelling. But when they became insubordinate, or, in other words, when they sinned, the indwelling of God was withdrawn, and thus commenced the lost condition of the general world of the heavens and the earth.

“The light and the life and the love of God have departed from His creation because of sin, and thus the darkness and the death and the hate that rule instead. Therefore much is said in Scripture of the absence of God and the emptiness of creation, on the one hand, and the prayers and the outcries for His return, and the filling of creation with His presence, on the other hand. Compare Hosea 5:15 with Psalm 90:13; and Romans 8:20-23 with Numbers 14:21.

“Much of the Bible is occupied with the accounts of the departure of the Lord, on the one hand, and with prophecies and promises of His return, on the other hand. Thus there was a presence of the Lord on the earth before the flood (Genesis 4:16), but it must have departed in that dreadful reign of sin and judgment (Genesis 6:3-12). There was a presence of the Lord in the Shekinah light (Exodus 40:35; I Kings 8:11), but it departed in the reign of the wicked kings (Ezekiel 11:23) and was not found in the second temple. There was preeminently the presence of the Lord in the person of the Lord Jesus, but He departed because of the sins of the Jews, and their temple was left empty and desolate (Matthew 23:38, 39). And on the other hand the constant cry of the faithful has ever been, ‘Return, return, come, come,’ till it is the chief refrain of the Revelation, as we read in the last chapter: ‘**The Spirit and the bride say, Come; let him that heareth say, Come,**’ and ‘**He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come,**’ to which the seer replies, ‘**Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**’ The whole spirit of prophecy and of promise looks forward to the grand coming of the Lord, that the earth may be filled with His glory: Isaiah 59:20; Zechariah 8:3; Malachi 3:1; John 14:3.”

## II. MAN

In the doctrine of Anthropology, under the topic of The Fall of Man, we have noted the threefold separation that has resulted from the disobedience of our first parents, viz: from the tree of life, from the Garden of Eden, and from the personal and visible presence of the Lord.

We have further noted that physical death was the natural consequence of separation from the tree of life, and spiritual death the inevitable consequence of separation from the presence of the Lord. Sin in the form of disobedience was the one and only cause of both. We are now to look at the dark and desolate picture which the Scriptures draw of the devastating and death-dealing results of sin in man's spirit, soul, and body:

1. **All have sinned:** Psalm 14:2, 3; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:9, 10, 22, 23; I John 1:8-10.
2. **Every mouth stopped:** Psalm 130:3; 143:2; Romans 3:19.
3. **All under a curse:** Galatians 3:10.
4. **All children of the devil:** John 8:44; I John 3:8-10.
5. **Natural man a stranger to the things of God:** I Corinthians 2:14.
6. **Natural heart deceitful:** Jeremiah 17:9.
7. **Alienated from the life of God—understanding darkened:** Ephesians 4:18.
8. **Mental and moral nature corrupt:** Genesis 6:5, 12; 8:21; Psalm 94:11; Romans 1:19-31.
9. **Outward behavior vile and detestable:** Ephesians 2:3; Titus 3:3; Colossians 3:5, 7-
10. **Slaves of sin:** Romans 6:17; 7:5, 7, 8, 14, 15, 19, 23, 24.
11. **Controlled by prince of the power of the air:** Ephesians 2:2.
12. **Carnal mind enmity against God:** Romans 8:7, 8.
13. **Children of wrath:** Ephesians 2:3.
14. **Dead in trespasses and sins:** Ephesians 2:1.
15. **Body weakened and death-doomed:** II Corinthians 4:7; Romans 8:11.

Thus we see that, as the result of sin, man's spirit is alienated from and antagonistic to God, his mind deteriorated and darkened, and his body diseased and death-doomed. By nature, man is helpless and a hopeless sinner; HE IS LOST.

## **TOPIC SIX: THE PENALTY OF SIN**

### **I. DEFINITION OF PENALTY**

Penalty has been defined as, essentially, the reaction of divine holiness against sin. It is the infliction of pain or suffering as punishment upon the lawbreaker by the Law-giver because of his ill-desert.

**NOTE:** The object of penalty is not primarily the reformation of the law-breaker nor the prevention of others becoming law-breakers, but the vindication of the character of the Lawgiver.

Two kinds of penalty have been distinguished, namely, moral and positive. \

### **II. MORAL PENALTY**

The term moral penalty is used of the natural consequence of sin, the results of the transgression and depravity which manifest themselves now in the spirit, soul, and body of all the sons of Adam and Eve.

**NOTE:** An illustration may make clear the difference intended between the terms moral and positive penalty. A father forbids his son to climb trees under threat of punishment, the punishment to be a diet of bread and water for three days. The boy disobeys his father's command and breaks his arm by falling from a tree. Now, the long confinement and intense suffering which the lad undergoes because of his broken arm may be called the moral penalty which he endures, i. e., the natural consequences of his disobedience. But in no true sense is this the punishment for his act of disobedience. After the son's recovery, the father, in order to uphold parental authority, and punish him for his ill-desert, must keep him on bread and water for three days. And this may be called positive penalty, i. e., the actual infliction of suffering by the father upon the son for the latter's transgression.

On this point Dr. Farr says: "The natural consequences of transgression, although they constitute a part of the penalty of sin, do not exhaust that penalty. In all penalty there is a personal element, the holy wrath of the Law-giver, which is only partially expressed by natural consequences.

- Sensual sins are punished by the deterioration and corruption of the body;
- Moral and spiritual sins by the deterioration and corruption of the soul: Proverbs 5:22; 11:21.

This is only half the truth. Those who confine all penalty to the reaction of natural law forget that God is not only immanent in the universe, but also transcendent; and that to fall into the hands of the living God, Hebrews 10:31, is to fall into the hands, not merely of the law, but also of the Law-giver. Distinctive moral punishment is remorse of conscience and the pains connected with it—a sense of shame, regret, blameworthiness, etc. Michael Angelo has done as much mischief in art as Dante and Milton have in literature, by giving the impression that physical punishment and suffering alone await the transgressor."

### **III. POSITIVE PENALTY, OR THE FUTURE PUNISHMENT OF THE IMPENITENT WICKED**

The term positive penalty is used in reference to the final destiny of the wicked: II Peter 3:9. This destiny is set forth in the Scriptures under a variety of expressions, some of the more striking being the following:

- 1. The resurrection of judgment:** John 5:28, 29.
- 2. Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish:** Romans 2:8, 9.
- 3. Eternal destruction:** II Thessalonians 1:9.
- 4. Lake of fire:** Revelation 20:15.
- 5. The punishment of eternal fire:** Jude 7.
- 6. Eternal punishment:** Matthew 25:41.
- 7. The lake of fire that burneth with brimstone:** Revelation 19:20.
- 8. The second death:** Revelation 21:8.
- 9. Hell** (Greek, *Tartarus*): II Peter 2:4.

While the above expressions all refer to the same thing, yet the final destiny of the impenitent wicked is perhaps most commonly described as death and destruction.

Consequently, upon a right understanding of the Biblical usage of these terms hinges the truth concerning future punishment. Let us, then, briefly study these words.

### **The Word DEATH—Greek: *Thanatos***

The New Testament usage—in fact the Biblical usage of the word death—is threefold, namely: physical death, spiritual death, and eternal death.

#### **1. Physical Death.**

Physical death is, of course, the separation of the soul from the body—resulting in the corruption and destruction of the material frame: John 11:14; Acts 2:24; Romans 8:38.

#### **2. Spiritual Death.**

Spiritual death may be defined as the separation of the spirit from God. Into this state everyone comes by natural birth. Thus, the prodigal son, Luke 15:24; sinners, Ephesians 2:1; the pleasure-loving widow, I Timothy 5:6; the church of Sardis, Revelation 3:1.

#### **3. Eternal Death.**

Eternal death may be defined as spiritual death continued after physical death—the state of a soul through eternity dying impenitent in trespasses and sin: Romans 1:32; James 5:20.

But eternal death is more than the perpetuation throughout eternity of the state of spiritual death. It is referred to as the “**second death**”: Revelation 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8. Now, in Revelation 20:10, “**the lake of fire**” is described as a place of conscious and unending torment: for the devil is cast therein, where after a thousand years “**the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever.**” Therefore, “**the second death**” is a place of conscious and unending torment.

**NOTE:** Dr. Torrey says: “Life is defined in the Bible not merely as existence, but as right existence—knowing the true God and the life manifested in Christ: John 17:3; I John 1:1, 4.

Death, then, is not mere non-existence, but wrong, wretched, debased, devilish existence. And ‘the second death,’ which is the final outcome of a life of sin, is defined in the New Testament as a portion in the place of torment: Revelation 21:8.”

### **The Word DESTRUCTION—Greek: *Apoleia***

In the New Testament the word destruction (or perdition) has a twofold meaning, namely: a general and a special meaning.

#### **1. General Meaning.**

In the New Testament, when anything is said to perish or be destroyed, it is not meant that it ceases to exist, but that it is ruined, so that it no longer subserves the purpose for which it was intended or designed.

Thus, Matthew 9:17: “**Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.**” Here the burst wine-skins have not perished or been destroyed in the sense of ceasing to exist, but they can no longer hold wine, and hence as wine-skins are ruined.

Again, Matthew 26:8: “**But when the disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose was this waste**” (literally, destruction). Here the precious ointment poured from the alabaster cruse upon the head of the Master was not destroyed nor had not perished in the sense of ceasing to exist, but it was ruined as ointment—that is, like spilt milk it could not be recovered.

## 2. Special Meaning.

In the New Testament the specific meaning of destruction, or perdition, is in application to the future punishment or the final destiny of the impenitent wicked: Matthew 7:13; John 17:12; Romans 9:22; Philippians 1:28; 3:19; II Thessalonians 2:3; I Timothy 6:9; Hebrews 10:39; II Peter 2:1 (translated “*damnable*” and “*destruction*”); II Peter 2:2 (translated “*pernicious way*”); II Peter 2:3 (translated “*damnation*”); II Peter 3:7, 16; Revelation 17:8, 11.

With reference to future punishment note carefully the following points:

First. There is no evidence or indication that the specific meaning of destruction, or perdition, differs in any way from the general meaning: that is, whenever the impenitent wicked are said to perish or be destroyed, it is not meant that they cease to exist, but that they are ruined or lost: that is, they are banished from the presence of God and from the felicity and ministry of heaven.

Second. The specific meaning of destruction, or perdition, coincides with that of eternal or the second death. This point is established by the fact that “**the second death**” is synonymous with the “**lake of fire.**” That is to say, if the second death is the same as the lake of fire, Revelation 20:14, and perdition, or destruction, is the same as the lake of fire, Revelation 17:8, 11; 19:20, then destruction, or perdition, and the second death must be the same thing. This follows because of the mathematical and logical axiom that, if two things are equal to a third thing, they are equal to each other.

Third. Destruction, or perdition, which is the final doom of the impenitent wicked, is described in the New Testament as the condition of beings in a place of conscious and unending torment.

This vital fact is established by combining the teaching of a number of passages. For example: Revelation 17:8, 11. Here “**the beast**” is said to go into “**perdition.**” Again, Revelation 19:20. Here “**the beast**” is declared to have been “**cast into a lake of fire burning with fire and brimstone.**”

That is to say, “**the lake of fire burning with fire and brimstone**” is “**perdition,**” or “**destruction.**” Therein the false prophet was cast along with the beast. Again, Revelation 20:10. Here we are told that “**the devil . . . was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever.**”

Upon this last passage Dr. Torrey’s comment is: “Here we find the beast still in the lake of fire and brimstone (that is, in perdition), being tormented after a thousand years have passed away.”

With this agree Revelation 14:10, 11, where we learn that those who worship the beast and receive his mark “**shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night.**”

Finally Luke 16:19-31—the story of the rich man and Lazarus. This is commonly called a parable, but the term parable is not used by the Master. It is rather an unveiling of the future—a real portrayal of the state of the impenitent lost. Note these facts concerning the rich man.

- (1) *He has memory*, verse 25.
- (2) *He has remorse*, verse 24.
- (3) *He has torment*, verse 24.
- (4) *He has concern* for his living brothers, verse 28.
- (5) *He has a vision* of Lazarus “comforted,” verse 25.
- (6) *He pleads in vain* for mercy and relief, verses 25, 26.
- (7) A “**great gulf fixed**” separates the impenitent wicked from the saints of God.

Surely all this must mean that the future punishment of the wicked is conscious and unending.

Fourth. The everlasting, or eternity, of the torment of the impenitent wicked is expressed by the phrase “**day and night forever and ever**”: Revelation 20:10 (Literally, day and night unto the ages of the ages). But it is objected that this phrase refers to a period of limited but unknown duration. In reply it may be said:

- As to the expression “**day and night**” it seems to imply a sense of time in the eternal state. See Revelation 4:8; 7:15; 12:10; 14:11; 20:10.
- As to the expression “**forever and ever**” (literally, unto the ages of the ages), it occurs twelve times in Revelation, viz: 1:6; 4:9, 10; 5:13; 7:12; 10:6; 11:15; 14:11; 15:7; 19:3; 20:10; 22:5.

Eight times it refers to the duration of the existence or reign of glory of God and Christ, once to the duration of the blessed reign of the righteous, and in the three remaining instances to the duration of the torment of the devil, beast, false prophet, and wicked.

**NOTE:** The Greek word *aion* signifies an age—an indefinitely endless succession of ages—“**unto the ages of the ages.**” A measuring yardstick infinitely extended would give in terms of space the conception that the Greek phrase *eis tous aionas ton aionon*, “**unto the ages of ages,**” gives in terms of time.

From *aion* comes *aionios*, an adjective, signifying, literally, age-long, and rendered in English by “**everlasting or eternal.**” It has been objected that *aionios* cannot mean eternal duration, because it is sometimes applied to objects which have an end, e. g., the everlasting hills: Genesis 49:26.

To this objection, Dr. Farr replies thus: “It may be conceded that it (*aionios*) does not etymologically necessitate the idea of eternity, and that sometimes it is used in the sense of age-long to express limited duration. It does, however, express the longest possible duration of which the subject to which it is attributed is capable. So that if the soul is immortal, its punishment must be without end. It is used several times to express the life and duration of God Himself: Romans 16:26; I Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 9:14; Revelation 1:8. *Aioinios* is used in the New Testament sixty-six times—fifty-one times for the happiness of the righteous; two times for the duration of God and His glory; six times where there is no doubt as to its meaning ‘eternal,’ and seven times of the punishment of the wicked. *Aion* is used ninety-five times for duration that has limit, nine times to denote the duration of future punishment. The most eminent Greek scholars have decided and declare that if these words do not teach the endlessness of the future punishment, to which they are applied, there are no words in the Greek language to express that meaning.”

Fifth. The teaching of the Scripture is clear that the issues of eternity are settled in this life. See Luke 16:26; John 5:28, 29; 8:21; Hebrews 9:27.

Sixth. There is absolutely no Scripture to warrant the hope entertained by many that those who die having never heard of Christ in this world will be given another opportunity for salvation. See Romans 2:12-16.

This passage is introduced by the apostle not to show how men are saved by the light of nature, but rather to show “how the Gentile is under condemnation by the written law in his heart just as the Jew is under condemnation by the Law of Moses.” Romans 3:19-22 is conclusive that both Jew and Gentile are saved only by faith in Christ.

Says Dr. Torrey: “The future state of those who reject the redemption offered to them in Christ is plainly declared to be a state of conscious, unutterable, endless torment and anguish. The conception is an awful and appalling one. It is, however, the Scriptural conception and also a reasonable one when we come to see the appalling nature of sin, and especially the appalling nature of the sin of trampling under foot God’s mercy toward sinners, and rejecting God’s glorious Son, whom His love has provided as Saviour. Shallow views of sin and of God’s holiness, and of the glory of Jesus Christ and His claim upon us, lie at the bottom of weak theories of the doom of the impenitent. When we see sin in all its hideousness and enormity, the holiness of God in all its perfection, and the glory of Jesus Christ in all its infinity, nothing will satisfy the demands of our own moral intuitions but a doctrine that those who persist in the choice of sin, who love darkness rather than light, and who persist in the rejection of the Son of God, shall endure everlasting anguish. Nothing but the fact that we dread suffering more than we loathe sin, and more than we love the glory of Jesus Christ, makes us repudiate the thought that beings who eternally choose sin should eternally suffer, or that men who despise God’s mercy and spurn His Son should be given over to endless anguish.”

Seventh. In view of this awful doctrine, what about our impenitent friends and loved ones? Dr. Torrey, to whose book "*What the Bible Teaches*" we express our indebtedness in the treatment of this topic, thus answers this question and concludes his general discussion: "It is better to recognize facts, no matter how unwelcome, and try to save these friends from the doom to which they are certainly hurrying, than to quarrel with facts and seek to remove them by shutting our eyes to them. You cannot avert a hurricane by merely believing that it is not coming.

"Suppose one you love should commit some hideous wrong against one you love more, and persist in it eternally, would you not consent to his eternal punishment?"

"If, after men have sinned, and God still offers them mercy, and makes the tremendous sacrifice of His Son to save them,—if they still despise that mercy and trample God's Son under foot, if then they are consigned to everlasting torment, I say: 'Amen! Hallelujah! True and righteous are Thy judgments, O Lord!'

"At all events, the doctrine of conscious, eternal torment for impenitent men is clearly revealed in the Word of God, and whether we can defend it on philosophic grounds or not, it is our business to believe it, and leave it to the clearer light of Eternity to explain what we cannot now understand, realizing that God may have infinitely wise reasons for doing things for which we, in our ignorance, can see no sufficient reason at all. It is the most ludicrous conceit for beings so limited and foolish as the wisest of men to attempt to dogmatize how a God of infinite wisdom must act. All we know as to how God will act is what God has seen fit to tell us.

"In conclusion, two things are certain: First, the more closely men walk with God and the more devoted they become to His service, the more likely they are to believe this doctrine. Many men tell us they love their fellowmen too much to believe this doctrine; but the men who show their love in more practical ways than sentimental protestations about it, the men who show their love for their fellow-men, as Jesus Christ showed His, by laying down their lives for them, they believe it, even as Jesus Christ believed it.

"As Christians become worldly and easy-going, they grow loose in their doctrine concerning the doom of the impenitent. The fact that loose doctrines are spreading so rapidly and widely in our day is nothing for them, but against them, for worldliness is also spreading in the church: I Timothy 4:1; II Timothy 3:1; 4:2, 3. Increasing laxity of life and increasing laxity of doctrine go arm in arm. A church that dances and frequents theaters and lives in self-indulgence during the week enjoys a doctrine on the Lord's Day that makes the punishment not so awful after all.

"Second, men who accept a loose doctrine regarding the ultimate penalty of sin (Restoration or Universalism or Annihilationism) lose their power for God. They may be clever at argument and zealous in proselyting, but they are poor at soul-saving. They are seldom found beseeching men to be reconciled to God. They are more likely to be found trying to upset the faith of those already won by the efforts of others than winning men who have no faith at all. If you really believe the doctrine of the endless, conscious torment of the impenitent, and the doctrine really gets hold of you, you will work as you never worked before for the salvation of the lost. If you in any wise abate the doctrine, it will abate your zeal.

“Time and time again the author has come up to this awful doctrine and tried to find some way of escape from it, but when he has failed, as he always has at last, when he was honest with the Bible and with himself, he has returned to his work with an increased burden for souls and an intensified determination to spend and be spent for their salvation.

“Finally: Do not believe this doctrine in a cold, intellectual, merely argumentative way. If you do, and try to teach it, you will repel men from it. But meditate upon it in its practical, personal bearings, until your heart is burdened by the awful peril of the wicked and you rush out to spend your last dollar, if need be, and the last ounce of strength you have, in saving these imperiled men from the certain, awful hell of conscious agony and shame to which they are fast hurrying.”

### QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What have you to say concerning the origin of sin?
2. What do the Scriptures appear to teach concerning the entrance of sin into the heart of Satan?
3. How was sin introduced into the human race?
4. What is the teaching of Scriptures concerning the reality of sin?
5. What is the testimony of mankind as to the reality of sin?
6. What is the witness of consciousness as to the reality of sin?
7. How would you show that sin is not an accident, not an infirmity, nor “an amiable weakness”?
8. How would you show that sin is not a negation nor a necessity?
9. Can you give the literal signification of the seven most prominent Hebrew words for sin? Give one reference for each word.
10. Can you give the literal signification of the eight most prominent Greek words for sin? Give one reference of each.
11. Can you give seven Scripture descriptive definitions of sin? State where they are found.
12. Can you give six theological definitions of sin?
13. Can you give the summary of Scripture teaching concerning sin? Give references.
14. What is the extent of sin as it affects the heavens?
15. What is the extent of sin as it affects the earth?
16. Can you describe two results of sin as it affects the earth?
17. Can you mention ten results of sin as it affects man?
18. Can you define penalty? What is its primary object?
19. Can you make clear two kinds of penalty?
20. Can you give five Scripture expressions for the final destiny of the impenitent wicked? Give references.
21. Can you give the threefold Scripture meaning of death? Give references.
22. Can you show from Revelation that spiritual or second death is a place of conscious and unending torment?
23. What is the general New Testament meaning of destruction, or perdition?
24. What is the specific New Testament meaning of destruction, or perdition?
25. Can you find any Scripture evidence or indication that, either in its general or specific meaning, destruction, or perdition, signifies cessation of being?
26. Can you show from Revelation that the specific meaning of destruction, or perdition, coincides with eternal or the second death?

27. Can you show from the New Testament that destruction, or perdition, is a condition of being in a place of conscious and unending torment?
28. What is the New Testament usage of the expression “day and night forever and ever”?
29. What is the New Testament usage of the words signifying “age” and “age-long,” the latter being rendered in English by “eternal” or “everlasting”?
30. What passages of Scripture teach us that the issues of eternity are settled in this life?
31. Can you find any clear and unmistakable Scripture warrant for the hope that those who die having never heard of Christ will be given another chance for salvation hereafter?
32. If we believe the Word of God and are loyal to Christ, what attitude are we bound to take regarding our friends and loved ones who die impenitent r
33. How should the doctrine of future punishment be believed and preached?

**~ end of chapter 5 ~**

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