

The Great Christian Hopes Pt 7: Hope of Eternal Justice

Rev. 6:9-17 – “When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; **10** and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ **11** And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until *the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.*”

12 “I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth *made of hair*, and the whole moon became like blood; **13** and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. **14** The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.”

15 “Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; **16** and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; **17** for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’” NASB

I. Justice

A. Rev. 6:10 – A cry for justice

1. “How long, O Lord, holy and true?”
2. A cry for the character of God to be manifested.
3. Justice, by its nature, brings judgment.
4. Those who have rejected the offer of mercy in Jesus Christ will have to face the consequences of their choice.
5. The Second Coming of Jesus releases God’s justice.

B. Prov. 28:5 – “Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand...”

C. Ex. 34:6-7 – God “...will, by no means, leave the guilty unpunished.”

1. This is the manifestation of God’s goodness. (Ex. 33:19)
2. This is the manifestation of God’s glory. (Ex. 33:18)

II. The Necessity of Justice

A. The wrath of God is the only proper response of righteous indignation against sin.

B. God’s wrath is not an insane rage, but the predetermined posture of His holiness against sin.

C. God cannot be neutral or passive about sin, any more than He could approve of it. (Gen. 18:20-32)

[Even as we want cancer out of our body, God wants sin out of His universe.]

- D. 1 Jn. 1:9 says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
1. It is justice that we confess our sins.
 2. If we repent (turn away) from our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, He will count the debt as having been paid.
 3. It is based upon His justice that He forgives us.
 4. Apart from this pathway, there is no just way out.
- E. When we press past the grace of God, there remains nothing but His justice.

III. Justice Necessitates Hell (Lk. 16:19-31)

- A. This story is not about the evil of riches or the spirituality of poverty, but about the eternal justice of God.
- B. Old Testament: “Sheol” – “The place of departed souls”
- C. New Testament: “Hades”, “Paradise”, “Abraham’s bosom”
1. After Jesus’ death, He first descended into the “lower parts of the earth.” (Eph 4:8-9)
 2. Jesus preached to the Old Testament saints in Paradise. (1 Pet. 3:19)
 3. Then He led them in a great procession to the Father, made worthy by His blood. (Eph. 4:8; Col. 2:15)
 4. Today, because of Christ’s blood, “to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.” (2 Cor. 5:8)
- D. Description of Hades, a foreshadowing of Hell (Lk. 16:23-31)
1. A real place (v. 23a)
 2. An acute consciousness (v. 23b)
 3. A place of suffering (vv. 23c-24)
 4. Carrying out choices made on earth (v. 25)
 5. Desire only to be relieved of the pain of sin (v. 24)
 6. Memory is retained (vv. 24-25, 27-28)
 7. Intentions are fixed (vv. 26-31)

IV. The Awfulness of Hell (Jn. 3:18-21)

- A. A place where there is no light. (Jn. 3:19-21; Mt. 8:12; 22:13)
“Gehenna”
- A term originating from the Valley of Hinnom (or Henna), which was condemned to be a garbage dump because of former Molech worship.
 - The place outside Jerusalem which became the burial ground of criminals and animal carcasses.
 - An incinerator of rubbish with constant fires burning.
- B. A lake of burning fire (Rev. 20:15)
- C. Unquenchable fire (Mk. 9:44-45)

- D. The result of the choices of man (Jn. 3:19)
- E. A place of “weeping...gnashing of teeth” (Mt. 8:12)
 - Ever angry at God and one another
- F. “Outer Darkness” (Mt. 8:12; 22:13)
 - Utter aloneness or isolation
 - The ultimate limits of depression upon the spirit of man
- G. Eternal separation from God
 - Ever decaying, but never consumed

V. Jesus Embraced Judgment for Us

- A. Heb. 9:27 – “It is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgment.”
- B. All judgment now hinges upon this: “What will you do with Jesus?”
- C. Jesus is the only way out of Hell because He embraced our judgment. (Jn. 14:6)

VI. The Hope of Final Justice

Ps. 73:2-3, 12-13, 16-19 [NASB]

2 “But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling, my steps had almost slipped. **3** For I was envious of the arrogant as I saw the prosperity of the wicked...**12** Behold, these are the wicked; And always at ease, they have increased in wealth. **13** Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and washed my hands in innocence...”

16 “When I pondered to understand this, it was troublesome in my sight **17** until I came into the sanctuary of God; then I perceived their end. **18** Surely you set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. **19** How they are destroyed in a moment! They are utterly swept away by sudden terrors!”

2 Cor 5:11, 14-15 [MSG]

“That keeps us vigilant, you can be sure. It’s no light thing to know that we’ll all one day stand in that place of Judgment. That’s why we work urgently with everyone we meet to get them ready to face God...Our firm decision is to work from this focused center: One man died for everyone. That puts everyone in the same boat. He included everyone in his death so that everyone could also be included in his life, a resurrection life, a far better life than people ever lived on their own.”