

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning
Week 29 (July 13-19, 2014)

We finished last week's devotions with Satan being thrown into the lake of fire (hell), thus joining the antichrist and false prophet who entered 1000 years earlier (see Revelations 20:10). We will spend this week looking at passages on the subject of hell, the final abode of all who reject Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Sunday, July 13 (read Revelation 20:11-15)

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. (Revelation 20:14)

When I preach on the subject, "You Must Be Born Again" from the 3rd chapter of John, I include this quote: "You can either be born twice and die once or you can be born once and die twice. The choice is yours!" Immediately following the destruction of our current earth, all the lost from all eternity will stand before the Great White Throne of God to be judged by their works (v. 11-13). They could have received Jesus for the forgiveness of sins, but they chose to stand with the "salvation by works" crowd who thought they did not need a Savior. Since "all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), **no one** will be declared righteous at this judgment (Romans 3:20). **Everyone** who chose to reject the free gift of salvation (Romans 6:23) will be cast into the lake of fire. Have you asked Jesus to place your name in His Book of Life (v. 15)?

Monday, July 14 (read Matthew 5:27-30)

It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. (Matthew 5:30b)

The current trend in many churches is to disbelieve in the existence of a place called hell. As I often say, "That won't change the temperature one degree!" Jesus talks more about hell than He does about Heaven. In today's text, the Lord nails the multi-billion dollar pornography industry by teaching that looking lustfully at a woman is **adultery** in the eyes of God (v. 27-28). Therefore, He tells you to remove the temptation and be very careful what you look at (eye) and what you touch (hand). We all know that we can still sin with one eye and one hand, so we must realize that Jesus is not advocating mutilating the body; instead, He is warning that those who ignore His words will be in danger of spending eternity in hell. If hell does not exist, would He have made this statement?

Tuesday, July 15 (read Matthew 23:33-38)

You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? (Matthew 23:33)

Matthew 23 records the Lord's rebuke of the religious leaders who are mistreating His chosen people in the name of religion. Since these Pharisees and Sadducees have rejected Him and are about to crucify Him, they will not escape spending eternity in hell (v. 33). He knows in advance what these men will do to future teachers and wise men and prophets: the same thing their forefathers did to the Old Testament prophets (v. 34). He is going to hold these current critics accountable for the death of all of His messengers throughout the ages (v. 35-36). The beautiful "chicken verse" follows (v. 37). The Lord wants to draw them (and us) under His saving grace, but He will not do so without permission. Unfortunately, most of the Jews will not believe in Jesus until the tribulation when they will finally proclaim, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord" (v. 38-39). As for you, do it now!

Wednesday, July 16 (read Matthew 25:40-46)

Then He will say to those on His left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41)

The setting for today's text is the tribulation when the Jews will need shelter and protection from the antichrist and his global government. It does not teach "salvation by works," but rather that true believers during these perilous times will risk their lives to protect God's chosen people. The point I want you to see is that hell has not been prepared for humans, but rather for the devil and his fallen angels (v. 41). However, all who reject the offer of salvation paid in full by our Lord's death and resurrection will spend eternity in outer darkness along with those for whom hell is prepared (see Revelations 20:15). Many tell me that they hate "hellfire and brimstone" sermons, but can the true minister of God ignore teaching this vital truth? Just as Heaven is real, so also is a literal lake of fire for those who refuse to come to Jesus and be saved.

Thursday, July 17 (read Matthew 22:1-14)

Then the king told the attendants, "Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 22:13)

The moral of this parable is that no one can come to the wedding supper of the Lamb (see Revelation 19:1-10) unless he/she has accepted the King's invitation of salvation and put on the "robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10) provided by the Lord's death on Calvary (v. 11). This robe replaces the garment of "filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6) that we have earned by our own personal righteousness. Jesus uses a different term (darkness) as a synonym for hell. Many ignore God's offer to attend the wedding of His Son (v. 1-7), and are eternally lost. What a sad condition! But I am also concerned about those who **say** they are waiting for the banquet, and yet, are dressed in their own righteousness. What a surprise it will be for all who join a church and are baptized, but who never truly give their life up for the cause of Christ.

Friday, July 18 (read Luke 16:19-31)

In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. (Luke 16:23)

We will conclude our study on hell with this text from Luke. Jesus pictures a nameless rich man and a very poor man named Lazarus (v. 19-21). The rich man does not go to hell because he has wealth; he goes to hell because his wealth has him! He has the means to assist the poor man with the food he throws out (v. 21), but he lives in luxury and ignores Lazarus' needs. The poor man, like everyone else, does not go to heaven because he is poor, but rather because he accepts the free gift of life purchased on Calvary. These two men's lives are quite different on earth, but they are even more different in eternity. Now it is the rich man who is begging for a small favor from Lazarus (v. 24). We will conclude this sad story tomorrow.

Saturday, July 19 (reread Luke 16:19-31)

But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony." (Luke 16:25)

I asked you to read the entire story again so that you may get the full impact of this tragedy. You wouldn't wish this on your worst enemy! Note that the man is not spared on the basis of being of the right nationality. He calls Abraham "father" (v. 27) and Abraham calls him "son" (v. 25), yet the rich man is in hell. He isn't saved because he has great concern for his family (v. 27-28). He is eternally lost because he rejects the teachings of Moses and the Prophets; therefore, the resurrection of Jesus Christ will not bring him to repentance either (v.29-31). I hold dearly to the following truth: If you will walk in obedience to the truth you have already understood, God will make sure that your path leads you to salvation because of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Then you can hear a sermon on hell and rejoice that your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life!