

# THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;  
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,  
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God  
IN CHRIST JESUS.***

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

#05-1121

## ***Satan's Destiny is not Hell***

January 21, 2011

**"But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."** (Revelation 21:8 NASB)

The last issue dealt with what, I believe to be the spiritual or figurative meaning of the word *brimstone* as presented in scripture, especially in reference to the lake of fire, which I have written about previously. I won't cover that ground in this issue, so please see #04-1039, April 10, 2010, *Lake of Fire*. However, I have one more thought about brimstone that I was unable to include in the last issue.

A good friend of mine brought something to my attention that fits with what has been shared, and it deals with the common image people have of Satan and his present abode.

When people are asked to describe Satan's domain, that is, his environment, many, if not most, probably would answer that it is a place of fire and brimstone (burning noxious sulfur), which is how *hell* is often described. You know, a hellhole in the midst of the earth with fire shooting up all over the place with the poor sinners being tortured in these flames as worms are coming out of their ears. Really; this is what some people believe.

By the way, supposedly, the entrance to this hellhole is called **the gates of hell**, which is based on an incorrect understanding of Jesus' words to Peter.

**"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."** (Matthew 16:18 NASB)

The King James and other translations incorrectly use the word *hell* instead of Hades, which is simply the unconscious state of the dead, or more specifically, the unseen state of the soul.

Over the years, I have heard it preached many times that "the gates of hell will not prevail against the church," meaning that Satan and his dominion will not overcome the church. The problem is that this is not what Jesus was stating to Peter and the others.

To be balanced in this discussion, there are others who see the gates of hell as simply the authority of Satan and his minions that rule the air. Ones who hold this view do not necessarily see hell as a fiery place at this time. Instead, they see the fiery hell coming into view with a literal lake of fire. Obviously, they hold to two different views of hell that are separated by thousands of years. It is all so very confusing! So, let us see if we can clear up this confusion, based on scripture and not on paganism or the traditions of men.

The gates of Hades are not the gates of hell, that is, the modern-day concept of hell held by so many Christians and non-Christians alike. They are more properly called the gates of death or the grave. For more explanation, please see issue #03-0955, April 22, 2009, *The Gates of Hades*.

When David was being pursued by his enemies, he cried to the Lord: **Be gracious to me, O LORD; See my affliction from those who hate me, You who lift me up from the gates of death** (Psalm 9:13 NASB).

When Hezekiah was on the verge of death, he cried out: **I said, In the noontide of my days I shall go into the gates of Sheol [Hades (Gr.) or grave]: I am deprived of the residue of my years.** (Isaiah 38:10 ASV)

Returning to Jesus' word on the gates of Hades: The fact of the matter is Jesus told His disciples that death would not overcome the church because He was about to overcome death, not only for the church but for the whole of mankind. The proof is that, after stating this, Jesus began to tell His disciples that He would be killed and then raised up on the third day (Matthew 16:21).

Now, this is what my good friend brought to my attention.

Here is a question for those who see Satan's present domain as a place of fire and brimstone called *hell*, with all its usual modern-day, hellfire preaching, and movie-hyped characterizations: Why does God cast the Devil into hell at the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ?

**The Devil, who is leading them astray, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are the beast and the false prophet...** (Revelation 20:10 YLT)

How can the hell of today be Satan's abode if he is going to be cast into the supposedly same hell in the future? Why cast the Devil into an abode that is well-suited for him? How will he be tormented if he is in his natural environment? Obviously, the answer is that he would not be tormented in such an environment. He would actually enjoy it. Thus, a *literal* fiery place of fire and brimstone cannot presently be the Devil's environment, nor will it be his *literal* environment in the future [emphasis on *literal*].

As presented in the last issue, fire and brimstone come from God's throne and is of God and not from Satan's domain. *Brimstone* signifies the cleansing and purifying power of divine righteousness that saves. In other words, the fiery law of God and divine brimstone will cleanse and purify Satan in the same way all the unjust will be cleansed and purified until [by] the consummation of the ages [eons].

Yes, you read correctly. I am sure some of you are asking: Do you mean to tell me that God is actually going to redeem Satan, as well, after all the carnage he has brought to mankind? Yes; why not! After all, God is the creator of good and evil, and He created the old crooked serpent to sin and be the father of lies, right from the beginning (1 John 3:8). It was all part of God's plan. See issues #03-09121, May 6, 2009, *Crooked, Ancient Serpent*, and #03-09122, May 8, 2009, *Why God Created Good and Evil*.

By the way, surely, Satan will be tormented in God's fiery law of righteousness but not excruciatingly tortured. Experiencing God's righteousness will be torment, in some measure, for all the unrighteous.

The eonian purpose of God is to be all in all, and, since Adam, God has been implementing His plan to achieve this purpose. Paul tells us God's plan is to subject all things to His Son, so that, ultimately, He, that is, God the Father may be all in all. To do this, all forms of death, the first and the second, must be abolished. No one or thing can remain in the lake of fire, which is the second death, for this to be true.

**When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.** (1 Corinthians 15:28 NASB)

Undoubtedly, Satan's place in the lake of fire will last for the full age of God's day, through to the end of the ages of the ages or the eons of the eons (literal rendering). The proper translation of Revelation 20:10 is: **They shall be tormented day and night—to the ages of the ages** (YLT).

At the consummation of the ages, death will be abolished and all will be restored to God so that the Father will be **All in All New** (1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Revelation 21:5). Do you think anything will be left out of God's all? How can He be All in all if a literal raging, fiery oven of torment and torture exists and continues for eternity? It is impossible! There is no exclusion in God's all. What part of God's all are we to leave out? God's created beings failed, but **God is love** never fails.

Why? Because **love never fails!** (1 Corinthians 13:8) Thank God!