

# The Ancient Inventors and Modern Perpetuators of Hell

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The original can be found at:

<http://what-the-hell-is-hell.com/AncientHell.htm>

Introduction: *The following quotes from ancient leaders prove where the modern concept of a "Hell of everlasting punishment" came from. The quotes also expose those who are still perpetuating those concepts. The first group of quotes represents proof regarding the originators of the concept. The second group of quotations are from Christian leaders who have been instrumental in perpetuating these diabolical thoughts.*

## The Inventors of Hell

1. **Polybius**, the ancient historian, says: "Since the multitude is ever fickle, full of lawless desires, irrational passions and violence, there is no other way to keep them in order but by the fear and terror of the invisible world; on which account our ancestors seem to me to have acted judiciously, when they contrived to bring into the popular belief these notions of the gods, and of the infernal regions." B. vi 56.

2. **Dionysius Halicarnassus** treats the whole matter as useful, but not as true. Antiq. Rom., B. ii

3. **Livy**, the celebrated historian, speaks of it in the same spirit; and he praises the wisdom of Numa, because he invented the fear of the gods, as "a most efficacious means of governing an ignorant and barbarous populace." Hist., I 19.

4. **Strabo**, the geographer, says: "The multitude are restrained from vice by the punishments the gods are said to inflict upon offenders, and by those terrors and threatenings which certain dreadful words and monstrous forms imprint upon their minds...For it is impossible to govern the crowd of women, and all the common rabble, by philosophical reasoning, and lead them to piety, holiness and virtue - but this must be done by superstition, or the fear of the gods, by means of fables and wonders; for the thunder, the aegis, the trident, the torches (of the Furies), the dragons, &c., are all fables, as is also all the ancient theology. These things the legislators used as scarecrows to terrify the childish multitude." Geog., B. I

5. **Timaeus Locrus**, the Pythagorean, after stating that the doctrine of rewards and punishments after death is necessary to society, proceeds as follows: "For as we sometimes cure the body with unwholesome remedies, when such as are most wholesome produce no effect, so we restrain those minds with false relations, which will not be persuaded by the truth. There is a necessity, therefore,

of instilling the dread of those foreign torments: as that the soul changes its habitation; that the coward is ignominiously thrust into the body of a woman; the murderer imprisoned within the form of a savage beast; the vain and inconstant changed into birds, and the slothful and ignorant into fishes."

6. **Plato**, in his commentary on Timaeus, fully endorses what he says respecting the fabulous invention of these foreign torments. And Strabo says that "Plato and the Brahmins of India invented fables concerning the future judgments of hell" (Hades). And Chrysippus blames Plato for attempting to deter men from wrong by frightful stories of future punishments.

Plato himself is exceedingly inconsistent, sometimes adopting, even in his serious discourses, the fables of the poets, and at other times rejecting them as utterly false, and giving too frightful views of the invisible world. Sometimes, he argues, on social grounds, that they are necessary to restrain bad men from wickedness and crime, and then again he protests against them on political grounds, as intimidating the citizens, and making cowards of the soldiers, who, believing these things, are afraid of death, and do not therefore fight well. But all this shows in what light he regarded them; not as truths, certainly, but as fictions, convenient in some cases, but difficult to manage in others.

7. **Plutarch** treats the subject in the same way; sometimes arguing for them with great solemnity and earnestness, and on other occasions calling them "fabulous stories, the tales of mothers and nurses."

8. **Seneca** says: "Those things which make the infernal regions terrible, the darkness, the prison, the river of flaming fire, the judgment seat, &c., are all a fable, with which the poets amuse themselves, and by them agitate us with vain terrors." Sextus Empiricus calls them "poetic fables of hell;" and Cicero speaks of them as "silly absurdities and fables" (ineptiis ac fabulis).

9. **Aristotle**. "It has been handed down in mythical form from earliest times to posterity, that there are gods, and that the divine (Deity) compasses all nature. All beside this has been added, after the mythical style, for the purpose of persuading the multitude, and for the interests of the laws, and the advantage of the state." Neander's Church Hist., I, p. 7. 11 (The above quotes were taken from "The Origin and History of the Doctrine of Endless Punishment" by Thomas Thayer.)

The question this book began with is now, I trust, answered by a sufficient number of witnesses to settle the matter. Hell was invented by men of power who felt it was the only way to hold the masses of ignorant people under their power. It is the same today. If the people of power today REALLY believed the myths they are perpetuating, they themselves would behave MUCH differently than they are. Seeing their own corrupt behavior should make it plain to anyone, these political, business, and especially religious leaders have not the slightest faith in these things themselves; they do not think them at all necessary to regulate their own lives, or keep them in order; but it is for the average people, the dumb sheep who must be restrained with fears of great terror in the afterlife. One cannot help noting the resemblance between those wise men of old and some of our own day, who seem so anxious to maintain the doctrine on the ground that it is necessary to restrain men from sin. I think it is time we "dumb sheep" wise

up and get out from under the myths these men of corruption have used to hold the fetters of our minds in check and check ourselves in at the sheepfold of the Good Shepherd who knows how to restrain HIS sheep with love, not fear. What do you think?

## **Quotes from Christian Perpetuators of the Mythology of Hell:**

The following quotes are from Christian leaders who used the pagan concept of Hell to keep the poor masses in subjection to power-hungry and often very evil political and religious men and women. The Church has often been a more effective means of enslaving the masses than military might. There are hundreds of thousands of other Church leaders throughout the centuries who could be quoted expressing similar thoughts to the ones below Compare these words to Jesus' words to the poor of this world and it should become very obvious from which spirit these men were speaking. Satan has controlled the Church for a long time. It's time for a great change.

**Tertullian** "At that greatest of all spectacles, that last and eternal judgment how shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness..."

**Jonathan Edwards** "Reprobate infants are vipers of vengeance, which Jehovah will hold over hell, in the tongs of his wrath, till they turn and spit venom in his face!"

"The view of the misery of the damned will double the ardour of the love and gratitude of the saints of heaven."

**Thomas Aquinas** "That the saints may enjoy their beatitude more thoroughly, and give more abundant thanks for it to God, a perfect sight of the punishment of the damned is granted them."

**Jeremy Taylor** "Husbands shall see their wives, parents shall see their children tormented before their eyes...the bodies of the damned shall be crowded together in hell like grapes in a wine-press, which press on another till they burst..."

## **Lengthier quotes:**

**Tertullian** "How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates liquefying in fiercer flames than they ever kindled against the Christians; so many sages philosophers blushing in red-hot fires with their deluded pupils; so many tragedians more tuneful in the expression of their own sufferings; so many dancers tripping more nimbly from anguish than ever before from applause."

**Jeremy Taylor** of the Church of England "The bodies of the damned shall be crowded together in hell, like grapes in a wine-press, which press one another till they burst; every distinct sense and organ shall be assailed with its own appropriate and most exquisite sufferings."

**Jonathan Edwards** (A Calvinist of the "Great Awakening" fame. Newspapers reported people leaving his sermons and committing suicide from the fear he instilled in them.)

"The world will probably be converted into a great lake or liquid globe of fire, in which the wicked shall be overwhelmed, which will always be in tempest, in which they shall be tossed to and fro, having no rest day and night, vast waves and billows of fire continually rolling over their heads, of which they shall forever be full of a quick sense within and without; their heads, their eyes, their tongues, their hands, their feet, their loins and their vitals, shall forever be full of a flowing, melting fire, fierce enough to melt the very rocks and elements; and also, they shall eternally be full of the most quick and lively sense to feel the torments; not for one minute, not for one day, not for one age, not for two ages, not for a hundred ages, nor for ten thousand millions of ages, one after another, but forever and ever, without any end at all, and never to be delivered."

**John Calvin** (Who had some of his theological enemies burned to death in green slow-burning wood.):

Calvin describes hell as: "Forever harrassed with a dreadful tempest, they shall feel themselves torn asunder by an angry God, and transfixed and penetrated by mortal stings, terrified by the thunderbolts of God, and broken by the weight of his hand, so that to sink into any gulf would be more tolerable than to stand for a moment in these terrors."

**The Reverend C. H. Spurgeon** in his sermon Sermon on the Resurrection of the Dead:

"When thou diest, thy soul will be tormented alone; that will be a hell for it, but at the day of judgment thy body will join thy soul, and then thou wilt have twin hells, thy soul sweating drops of blood, and thy body suffused with agony. In fire exactly like that which we have on earth thy body will lie, asbestos-like, forever unconsumed, all thy veins roads for the feet of pain to travel on, every nerve a string on which the devil shall forever play his diabolical tune of 'Hell's Unutterable Lament.'" (Quoted from Christ Triumphant by Thomas Allin)

**Night Thoughts by Young** "Father of Mercies! Why from silent earth didst thou awake and curse me into birth, tear me from quiet, banish me from night, and make a thankless present of Thy light, push into being a reverse of Thee and animate a clod with misery?" (Quoted in "The Bible Hell" by J.W. Hanson, page 28)

**Reverend J. Furniss, C.S.S.R** in his book The Sight of Hell (A Catholic book for children)

"Little child, if you go to hell there will be a devil at your side to strike you. He will go on striking you every minute for ever and ever without stopping. The first stroke will make your body as bad as the body of Job, covered, from head to foot, with sores and ulcers. The second stroke will make your body twice as bad as the body of Job. The third stroke will make your body three times as bad as the body of Job. The fourth stroke will make your body four times as bad as the body of Job. How, then, will your body be after the devil has been striking it every

moment for a hundred million of years without stopping? Perhaps at this moment, seven o'clock in the evening, a child is just going into hell. To-morrow evening, at seven o'clock, go and knock at the gates of hell and ask what the child is doing. The devils will go and look. They will come back again and say, the child is burning. Go in week and ask what the child is doing; you will get the same answer, it is burning; Go in a year and asks the same answer comes--it is burning. Go in a million of years and ask the same question, the answer is just the same--it is burning. So, if you go for ever and ever, you will always get the same answer--it is burning in the fire.) -- (Quoted from Christ Triumphant by Thomas Allin)

**More from Reverend J. Furniss, C.S.S.R** "The fifth dungeon is the red hot oven. The little child is in the red hot oven. Hear how it screams to come out; see how it turns and twists itself about in the fire. It beats its head against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet on the floor." (The Sight of Hell) (Quoted from Christ Triumphant by Thomas Allin)

**Reverend E.B. Pusey, D.D.**

"Gather in one, in your mind, an assembly of all those men and women, from whom, whether in history or in fiction, your memory most shrinks, gather in mind all that is loathsome, most revolting \* \* \* conceive the fierce, fiery eyes of hate, spite, frenzied rage, ever fixed on thee, looking thee through and through with hate \* \* \* hear those yells of blaspheming concentrated hate, as they echo along the lurid vault of hell; everyone hating everyone \* \* \* Yet a fixedness in that state in which the hardened malignant sinner dies, involves, without any further retribution of God, this endless misery." (Quoted from Christ Triumphant by Thomas Allin)

(The list will be expanded as time goes by. If the reader knows of any other quotes which would be appropriate to add to this list, please send them giving detailed references so they can be verified. Send them to: tentmaker@ktis.net)

## References:

#1 [Universalism--The Prevailing Doctrine of the Christian Church During Its First Five Hundred Years by Dr. J.W. Hanson](http://www.tentmaker.org/books/Prevailing.html)

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#4 [100 Scriptural Proofs](http://www.tentmaker.org/books/ScripturalProofs.html) Jesus is the Savior of the world

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### ***Mistranslation of Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, Gehenna:***

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100 Scriptural Proofs Jesus is the Savior of the world  
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***About the Author:*** I'd like the reader to be aware that I am a conservative Christian who spent several years in very evangelical fundamental churches. Even before I became a Christian my values were always conservative, not liberal. I mention this because that is often the first line of attack against this glorious truth. The belief in the salvation of all mankind through

Jesus Christ is NOT a far left liberal principle--it is simply a plain fact which Christians of all kinds should pray about, study and then joyfully embrace.