

# THE LAKE OF FIRE

Jon Macon

Revelation 21:1-7 gives a beautiful description of the wonderful blessings of heaven that are in store for all who overcome. Verse eight gives us the view of the other side. God says that *“the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”* All who overcome and only those who overcome will inherit the blessings of heaven and eternal life (Rev 21:7). All others will spend eternity in the lake of fire.

## **Those who will have their part in the lake of fire**

The kind of fearfulness that Revelation 21:8 warns us against is literally “timidity,” such as the apostles had during the great storm on the Sea of Galilee (Matt 8:24-26). Such fear prevents us from having faith in God. Jesus says he has given us his peace, and we should not let our heart be troubled or afraid (John 14:27). “For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2 Tim 1:7). All unbelievers will spend eternity in the lake of fire because it is impossible to please God without faith (Heb 11:6). When the apostle Thomas doubted the resurrection of Christ, the Lord urged him not to be “faithless, but believing” (John 20:27). The word “abominable” means “detestable” or “disgusting,” and comes from the Greek word “stink.” God hates all forms of wickedness (Prov 6:16-19; 15:9). Jesus also says *“that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God”* (Luke 16:15). The context of that statement is regarding the love of material things (Luke 16:13-14), something which men highly esteem, but God detests. All who love this world will spend eternity in the lake of fire. All murderers will also be there, and the Lord warns us that those who hate their brother are also murderers (1 John 3:15). Jesus warns us not to have anger against our brother, or to speak evil of him (Matt 5:21-22). If our brother has something against us, we should not wait for him to come to us. Jesus obligates us to immediately go and be reconciled with him (Matt 5:23-24). Revelation 21:8 reminds us that no fornicator will inherit the kingdom of God (see also 1 Cor 6:9-10; Eph 5:5; Heb 13:4). Jesus warns us that having lust is the same as committing the deed in our hearts (Matt 5:27-28).

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(continued)

Idolatry and sorcery are close companions (see also Gal 5:20). Idolatry includes the worship and service of anything that is not God. It includes bowing down to images, to the creation, etc., but God says that covetousness is also a form of idolatry (Eph 5:5; Col 3:5). Sorcery includes practices such as witchcraft, black magic (using potions and “spells” to curse someone), palm reading, astrology, etc. Sorcery in various forms is widespread in the world today. Practicing any of these things or having faith in them will doom our souls to hell. Finally, Revelation 21:8 tells us that “all liars” will spend eternity in the lake of fire. Not just some liars, but *all* liars will go to hell. Lying includes all forms of deception and falsehood. God hates lying (Prov 6:16-17; 12:22). Liars are children of the Devil (John 8:44). There is no situation in which lying is acceptable, and God commands us to put lying away (Eph 4:25; Col 3:9). If we do not, there will no escaping hell.

## **The second death**

Revelation 21:8 calls hell, the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, the “second death.” The “first” death is physical death, the separation of the spirit from the body (Jas 2:26). The “second” death is everlasting separation between man and God. Iniquity separates man from God (Isa 59:2; Col 1:21; Eph 2:12), which are “the wages of sin” (Rom 6:23). Unless a person repents of their sins and fulfills God’s will, that separation will become permanent in the hereafter (2 Thes 1:7-10). The endless torment and agony of the flames, from which there will never be any relief or escape (Rev 14:10-11), should give us sufficient motivation to do whatever we need to do to avoid hell. But the thought of facing eternity without any hope of ever being with God should also strongly deter us from falling into sin. The fact that this lake of fire was prepared for the devil and his angels in the first place (Matt 25:41), and the fact that they will be cast in that lake to spend their eternity (Rev 19:20; 20:10), and the fact that every wicked person will spend eternity there too (Rev 14:9-11; 21:8), should all motivate us to do everything we can to make sure we do not spend our eternity with them. Revelation 2:11 promises, “*He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.*”