

## How Long Is Hell?

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by Robert F. Turner

Of what duration is that state to which the Scriptures assign the Devil, his angels, and those who are his earthling subjects?

Well, how long is God? In Rom. 1:20 His power and deity are said to be **aidios** —eternal, or everlasting. The word is used only twice in the N.T. —the second time in Jude 6 where it describes the nature of the chains by which Satan's angels are bound.

In 1 Tim. 1:17 God is called King eternal (**ton aionon**, of the ages) and His honor and glory is for ever and ever (**aionas ton aionon**, ages of the ages). Then in Rev. 20:10 the Devil is cast into the lake of fire and tormented forever (**alonas ton aionon**, ages of the ages). The 14th and 15th verses say (the powers of) death and hell and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

How long is eternal life? I am aware that the term can refer to the quality of life in Christ, but the etymology of the word is that of duration. Moulton and Milligan say, it never loses the sense of perpetuus. In Jn. 10:28 Christ relates eternal (**aionion**) life with time, saying and they shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. It is this same word (**aionion**) that is used to describe the fire and destruction of Matt. 18:8, Jude 7, and 2 Thess. 1:9.

Matt. 25:46 assigns certain ones to punishment eternal (**aionion**) and others to life eternal (**aionion**). How long is hell (gehenna, punishment)? Exactly as long as heaven.

Man, being time bound, has time-bound concepts — and terminology. He has had to adapt his words, by special usage (as ages of the ages) to express perpetuity. When God wished to describe to man His eternal nature, He used the terms man would so understand. But the Bible terms that describe the unbounded limits of the punishment that awaits those who rebel against their Maker, are exactly the same terms used there to define the limitlessness of God, of Christ, and of the heavenly home of saints.

**ARE YOU READY FOR AN ETERNAL DESTINY?**

via Plain Talk  
Vol. 11,#1, page 1

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