



Joyful And Ardent Labor In The Scriptures

Studying the Bible with humility and reverence.
Studying to get to know God in truth, then live accordingly.

Just Who Will Be Tormented at Revelation 20:10?

May the following provide substantial support for why the Christian is under the imperative to test the quality of everything (1 Thess. 5:21). That is, whatever one submits to be believed as true regarding the Bible and its teachings, do not accept it as true and approve of it without first trying to ascertain its purity and soundness by examination and testing (cf. Acts 17:11). Put all such things to the test. Hold firmly to that which passes the touchstone of Scripture. Reject the rest. No word of any organization, ministry, denomination, church, individual, or web site is above scrutiny.

(Prior to his original online open letter to the Living Church of God the present writer submitted an e-mail and three letters to them between 2004 and 2006. There has been neither reply nor correction. The following is the open letter posted anew.)

Dear Living Church of God,

Questions & Answers in the January–February 2004 edition of *Tomorrow's World* reads:

Q[uestion:] Does Revelation 20:10 teach that the Beast and the false prophet will spend eternity being tormented in burning hell-fire?

A[nswer:] This is a common misunderstanding, caused by translators' (and many readers') careless assumptions. First, take a look at the verse in question. "And the devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:10).

Notice that the word "*are*" is in italics. This means that translators added the word, and that it is not part of the original Greek manuscripts. A more accurate English rendering would be "were cast"—since at the time of this verse, the Beast and false prophet have already been cast into the lake of fire (cf. Revelation 19:20). The pronoun "they" in the next sentence is also a translator's interpretation, added to the *New King James Version* but rightly absent from the *King James Version*.

Thus, an accurate translation of the verse would be: "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and false prophet *were cast*, and *he* shall be tormented day and night, forever and ever."

Now, the sense and meaning of this verse becomes clear. Satan, the Devil, will be thrown into the lake of fire. He will be the one who is tormented day and night.¹

Your translation "he shall be tormented" in Rev. 20:10 requires *basanisthesetai*, the future passive indicative 3rd person singular of *basanizo* (see Rev. 14:10). But the Majority Text and critical Greek texts all read Rev. 20:10 with *basanisthesontai* ("they will be tormented"), the future passive indicative 3rd person plural of *basanizo* (see the critical texts at Rev. 9:5). The verb does not require the presence of the nominative pronoun

autoi ("they") because a 3rd person plural subject is indicated by the verb's personal ending *-ntai*. Moreover, the Peshitta reads Rev. 20:10 with the 3rd person plural *neshtanquwn*; the Vulgate, the 3rd person plural *cruciabuntur*; and Luther, the 3rd person plural *werden gequälet werden*.

The texts demonstrate that your translation of Rev. 20:10 is not only erroneous but also misleading. The humiliating and bloody suffering and execution of Jesus Christ in the stead of sinners obliges greater diligence from us when handling the revelation God gave to Him. I respectfully ask for an immediate public correction for the sake of any reader your translation has led into a mistaken belief.

Thomas John Dexter

Notes

¹ Questions & Answers, *Tomorrow's World*, January–February 2004, 9. Note the argument for complete annihilation of the unregenerate as opposed to eternal conscious torment.
