

## EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION.

"It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you: and to you who are troubled, rest, [together] with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels [agencies], in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction [*aionion* – not limited, i.e., upon which destruction *no limit* has been placed,] from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power: When he shall [have] come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe (...) in that day." 2 Thes. 1:6-10.

This passage positively contradicts two classes of theorists. Those who claim that all will be saved eternally, are contradicted by the Apostle's statement that a class will merit and receive destruction, in harmony with Jesus' statement relative to the same "goat" class in Matt. 25:46. The large class which claims on the contrary that the punishment of the wicked is everlasting *torture*, are equally contradicted by the Apostle. He declares that the capital punishment which God will inflict upon the finally impenitent is DESTRUCTION, and that a class will receive this punishment or wages of sin – death.

But we notice the above passage specially, because some have thought it to teach that the class "who know not God," will be destroyed immediately when the Lord shall become "present," and thus fail to share in the Millennial blessings.

Aside from the saints who shall rest, the Apostle refers to two classes: the ignorant, who *know* not God [do not appreciate God's character and plans] and *obey* not the gospel," and "all them that believe" in that [Millennial] day.

First the Lord comes – is present; next comes the revealing of his presence. Until the revealing or manifesting of the Lord's presence, none will know of it except his saints, his "friends," (John 15:14) to whom it is revealed by faith through the testimony of the Scripture. Presently comes the revealing to the world which will be in flaming fire; trouble, judgments – consumingly destructive to evil and ignorance, and wrongs of every sort; taking vengeance, visiting tribulation upon evil systems and all wrong-doers.

This flaming fire, or punishment of wrong doing, with stripes and penalties, will continue to *burn* during the entire [R765 : page 5] Millennial age against wrong-doers, for Jesus reigns in order to "put down" all evil and the final result is stated to be the development of the two classes above referred to.

Those "who believe in that day" when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and who come into harmony with him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life shall be blessed; and He shall be "glorified" in the final perfection of all such in the end of the Millennial age – "all them that believe – in that day." On the other hand those who shall continue to be of the class who appreciate not God's character and obey not the good tidings of restitution shall be *then* accounted wilful sinners against full light and opportunity; and as such meet the specified and just reward: they shall "be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." For these there is not a further gleam of hope in either reason or Scripture. The object of Jesus' reign is to permit all who desire life on God's conditions, to obtain it. That reign will not close until its object shall have been fully accomplished every redeemed son of Adam shall have [R765 : page 6] full opportunity of proving himself worthy to retain the life which the great Restorer redeemed with his own. With the full end of trial must come a full end of evil: Neither sin nor sinners can go beyond the Millennial age and with its close all such shall be destroyed. Seven thousand years of mingled evil God sets

before us as the limit. "The Lord preserveth all them that love him, but all the wicked will he destroy." Psa. 145:20.

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