

THE BIOGRAPHY OF SATAN

Kersey Graves



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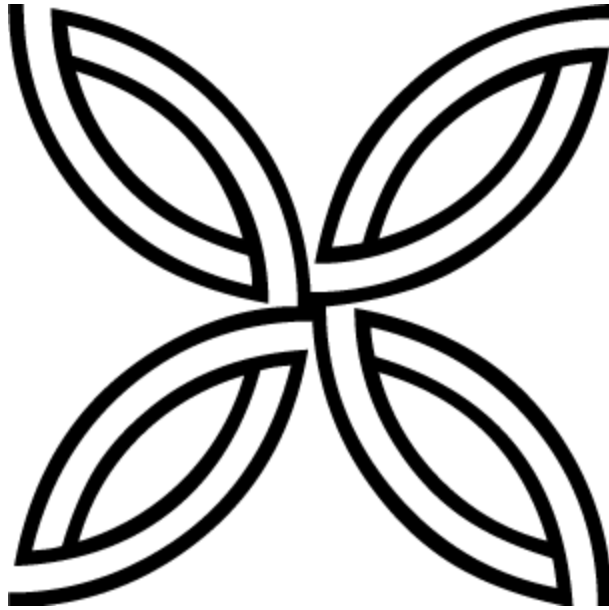
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Introduction. "Fear Hath Torment"

Friendly Reader: Are you, or have you ever been a believer in the doctrine of future endless punishment? And did you ever tremble with fearful apprehension that you might be irrevocably doomed to a life of interminable woe beyond the tomb? Did you ever shudder at the horrible thought, that either yourself or some of your dearest friends might possibly, in "the day of accounts," be numbered among those who are to receive the terrible sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels?" Matt, xxv: 41. Were you ever tormented and goaded with such fearful forebodings as these, and haunted with them day and night, for weeks and months together, if not during long and tedious years, as thousands upon thousands of the most devout believers in the Christian faith have been in all ages of the Church? Or were you ever present during a "religious revival," to witness the priest remove (in imagination) the cover from Hells burning mouth (that blazing, "bottomless pit," whose lurid flames of fire "ascendeth up forever and ever"), and did you hear him depict to a terror-stricken audience the awful fate of the countless millions of the "doomed, damned souls" of the underground world ¹? Did you ever listen as he portrayed their agonizing sufferings, and spoke of their loud, terror-inspiring, heart-rending wailings of anguish, their woeful groans, their doleful yells and soul-bursting shrieks of despair, which, like a thousand commingling thunders, reverberating along the great archway of their murky prison, shook "Heaven, and Earth, and Hell?" And did a shuddering fear steal over your nerveless frame, and

chill the blood in your very hearts in spite of your efforts to resist it and stave it off, as the “pulpit orator,” in glowing eloquence, depicted the wretched inhabitants of this world of woe, as being tossed to and fro with their naked souls upon a fathomless sea of flame; a shoreless ocean of boiling, blazing, sulphurous fire, lashed into furious, dashing mountainous billows, by the ever thundering, ever bursting, never-ceasing storms of divine wrath ? And as they essay to quench their parching thirst with this liquid fire, “the worm that never dies,” robed in burning brimstone, we are told, makes his eternal feasts upon the vitals of their bleeding hearts, lacerated by the swift-spiced thunderbolts of Jehovah’s direful vengeance —aye, the barbed arrows, fresh drawn from God’s own quiver! An old grim Lucifer, the deputed executor (in part) of God’s vengeful wrath, heedless of their doleful yells and maddening cries,, culminates the awful drama as he “woods up the fires and keeps them burning,” and pours the red-hot, blistering embers down their shrieking throats! A popular Christian clergyman, the Rev. Mr. D-----, in a fit of inspirational turgescence and mental explosion, which recently came off in Xenia, Ohio, as he collapsed, let off the following: “Fathers and sons, *pastors* [mark this, ye preachers!] and people, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, in unquenchable fire, with swollen veins and bloodshot eyes, strain toward each other’s throats and hearts, reprobate men and women, devils in form and features, hideous to behold. As God’s vengeance is in his heart, and he delights to execute it, he will tread them in his wrath and trample them in his fury, and he will stain all his garments with their blood! [Wonder if he will then reascend his burnished and beautiful “emerald throne” with these bloody clothes on.] My head grows dizzy, as it bends over the gulf!” [Quite likely, brother; lofty climbing always has the effect to make men with small brains giddy-headed. Empty vessels float easily. And we Humbly suggest

that you should have been cupped, blistered, bled, and put to bed instant, and opiates and cooling powders administered *ad infinitum* after such an exhausting, moonstruck effort to scare sinners into Heaven.]

Take another example: A Rev. Mr. Clawson, a Methodist Episcopal clergyman, as "it came to pass," being once pregnant with the spirit of eternal damnation, and not knowing, as we suspect, "whether he was in the body or out of the body" (2 Cor ii:4), blew up the *unconverted portion of his audience* in the following spasmodic style: "God will heap the red-hot cinders of black damnation upon your naked souls as high as the pyramids of Egypt." We suggest that Mrs. Partington would have considered this as rather a dangerous case of "*information of the brain,*" or of "a rush of brains to the head."

Now, kind reader, let me ask you, have you had any practical experience in listening to such frightful and frightening ebullitions of folly and fanaticism as the foregoing, which we have presented here as mere specimens of the kind of priestly flummery which are continually rolling out from the pulpit upon the recurrence of every Sabbath, in every part of Christendom? Though it is true such pompous and foolish language is not always used as is found in the examples we have here presented, yet the spirit manifested is the same. And have you ever calculated or reflected upon the vast, untold and almost inconceivable amount of terror, fright, misery and despair, and consequent destruction of happiness it has brought to millions of minds and millions of families of the present era, as well as those of the remotely past superstitious ages? If so, you can understand our object and appreciate our motive in throwing this book before the public. For certain we are, that "in fear there is torment," and consequently unhappiness; and certain we are, too, that if the two hundred millions of people called Christians could be made acquainted with the historical facts which will be found in

this work, and which go to prove most conclusively, that the doctrine of future endless punishment was originated and concocted by designing priests, and that a benevolent and beneficent God had nothing to do -with their origination, as is claimed by the devout disciples of every primitive religion in the world, it would have the effect to dissipate a fathomless and shoreless ocean of fear and misery from the religious world. For it is now well known to every intelligent person, that the fear of endless damnation has been, and still is, a powerful engine in the hands of the priests for “converting souls to God”— *i.e.*, for grinding (or scaring) sinners into saints, and that there has always been at least ten devil-dreading, hell-fearing Christians to one that is made practically righteous by the natural love of virtue and truth. It is the fear of the Devil, and not the love of God, which extorts from them a reluctant and tardy conformity to the principles of justice and the rules of practical honesty. That is, the Devil is virtually set upon their track as a hound dog to scare them into Heaven. And thus, they are nothing less, properly speaking, than *drafted saints*, or rather *pious sinners* —Christians by practice, but villains at heart. And if they shall receive the final benediction of “well done,” it will, we opine, have to be attributed more to a pair of fleet legs than to a virtuous mind, for the former achieve the work enabling them to out-run “the grand adversary of souls,” who howls upon every Christian’s track, “like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ’ ’ And here we may note it as a remarkable fact, that as momentous and solemnly important as this subject must be admitted to be, involving as it does our fate to all eternity, yet not one pious Christian in a thousand is able, when interrogated upon the subject, to give an intelligent answer as to the origin of the doctrine of *post mortem* punishment. (I have never found one that could). They know nothing about how, when or where it first started, and this ignorance is sufficient to account for their

blind and tenacious adherence to the superstition. It is generally believed and assumed, that its primary source is the Christian Bible. And does not, we ask, this lamentable ignorance greatly enhance the necessity and importance of publishing and circulating a work of this character, that by virtue of superior knowledge, the people may be undeceived in supposing that it is of divine institution, instead of being, as history proves, of mundane priestly origin, and that they may thereby be delivered from the agonizing thralldom of fear and fright which have in all past ages beset the votaries of the various fear-fraught religions. If it were ever a wise policy to try to frighten men into the path of virtue by "the fear of Hell torments," as was ingeniously argued by the Grecian Poly-archists (300 B.C.), that policy is now superseded by the substitution of more honorable, more laudable, and more enduring motives.

Chapter 1. Evils And Demoralizing Effects Of The Doctrine Op Endless Punishment

“ Grant me, great God, at least,
This one, this simple, almost no request:
When I have wept a thousand lives away,
When torment has grown weary of its prey;
When I have raved ten thousand years in fire—
Yea, ten thousand times ten thousand.
Let me then expire.”

We have not space for an elaborate exposition of the evils and immoral effects of the doctrine of endless torment, but will present a brief list of a portion of them, condensed from one larger work on this subject, of which this work is an epitome or abstract:

1. The belief in a cruel after-death punishment is (as we have already shown) the prolific source, on their own account of groundless and tormenting, fears to all its believers.
2. It is also the source of a fearful amount of the most painful unhappiness to millions of the human race in dread apprehension of the fate of their friends, even when but little is entertained on their own account.
3. The post mortem punishment doctrine taught by the Christian world, invests the Diety with a character absolutely dishonorable and disgraceful, if not blasphemous, by representing him as morally capable of inflicting the most excruciating punishment upon the major portion of his children, whereas he would be a cruel and