

# *What Happens to Unbelievers After Death, Do They Also Live Forever?*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Believers live forever because Christ grants them everlasting life. What about unbelievers, can their eternal existence be considered *living* forever? Scripture reveals that the unbeliever begins in a state of death and if he remains in that state, he will continue to die eternally not live eternally.

## II. WHAT IS THE UNBELIEVER'S FINAL STATE; CAN IT BE CONSIDERED *LIVING* FOREVER?

### A. *What is the Unbeliever's Problem and Current State? Death.*

The moment Adam sinned (Gen. 2:17) he plunged all humanity and creation into a state of death. Man's death problem is clearly revealed in John's Gospel (3:14-18, 36; 5:24; 8:21, 24), a book that is specifically designed to reverse man's death curse. This death was not merely physical, but it separated man from God. And if man remains dead in his trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1), he will *die in his sins* (John 8:21, 24) eternally the second death.

### B. *If the Problem of Death is not Solved, Then the First Death Leads to the Second Death, Which is Exactly What God Calls the Unbeliever's Final State (as well as the "Resurrection of Condemnation")*

If the unbeliever's death curse is not reversed by accepting Christ's gift of everlasting life, then the unbeliever will have to face Christ as Judge at the final judgment, where the second death awaits him (John 5:19-29; Revelation 20:11-15). His only hope then will be his good works, which cannot save anyone.

C. *The Unbeliever's Eternal State Involves Suffering*

The unbeliever's eternal state cannot be considered *living* forever because it involves eternal suffering (Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 20:10). Eternal suffering is not what God has in mind when He gives everlasting life to the unbeliever the moment he/she believes. The believer's life is the only source of peace in the midst of a fallen dead world. Christ came that we may have life and have it more abundantly, John 10:10.

III. IS THE UNBELIEVER'S SUFFERING ONLY TEMPORARY, SINCE THE LAKE OF FIRE EVENTUALLY CONSUMES HIM AND THUS END HIS SUFFERING?

A. *Is the Unbeliever's Suffering Only Temporary?*

No, Revelation 20:10. Additionally, those in Hades appear at the final judgment (Revelation 20:13), after being there for hundreds and hundreds of years, where they've been tormented by its flames (Luke 16: 19-24).

B. *Is it Possible for Fire not to Consume What it Burns: Moses and the Burning Bush*

Scripture clearly indicates that fire can burn something without consuming it (Exodus 3:1-3).

IV. CONCLUSION

The unbeliever's eternal state cannot be considered *living* forever because when he is cast into the lake of fire he is *dead* in his trespasses and sins and remains dead for all eternity, a state God calls the second *death*. Therefore, the unbeliever's state is better described as *dying forever* not living forever, especially since he will suffer eternally.