

A Loving God AND Judgment & Hell: Isn't That a Glaring Contradiction?

According to the Bible, God is “compassionate and gracious ... abounding in love.” Yet the same revelation speaks about a final judgement with eternal consequences. That is a perspective that contemporary Europeans find incredible, offensive, and deeply immoral. Can we today explain and defend the claim that the Son of Man – who did not come to judge the world – now is coming back to do precisely that: to judge the living and the dead?

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I. Introduction

- A. Judgement and hell are like emotional volcanos. Is a meaningful dialogue possible?
- B. What are the alternatives? No justice, everything is just now (law of karma) or a future justice.
- C. Judgement is good news; but what about hell?

II. Misconceptions and prejudices about hell

- A. Dante Alighieri: *Divina Commedia*
- B. Hell as the kingdom of Satan
- C. Metaphors – and the reality behind them

III. Hell as an assumption or a conclusion?

- A. Seven basic convictions in the teaching of Jesus:
 - 1. There is a God who is good and holy; he is morally perfect.
 - 2. Human beings have responsibility before their God.
 - 3. No one has lived up to that responsibility.

4. Through Jesus forgiveness and restoration is offered.
5. To reject Jesus is to reject God and confirms that you do not want God.
6. All humans will one day be resurrected to give an account for their lives before God.
7. God will reject everything evil and unclean and establish an eternal Kingdom of righteousness.

B. *From this follows the conclusion that there will be/must come an ultimate separation in humanity.*

C. In order to deny that conclusion, we have to either

1. deny one of Jesus' convictions or
2. show that the conclusion do not follow or
3. add new convictions that lead to a different conclusion.

IV. Our picture of God

A. What God must do:

1. He cannot ultimately accept or neglect evil; he must judge and reject evil.

B. What God cannot do:

1. He cannot forget what has happened in history.
2. He cannot forgive without a moral foundation for forgiveness.
3. He cannot force someone to receive forgiveness.

V. Three Objections

A. Universalism; texts in the Bible that talks about everyone being saved?

B. It was wrong of God to create; it would be better for the damned to not have been given existence!

C. Is the judgement fair in relationship to those who have never heard the gospel?

VI. Conclusion

A. What is the goal: A Paradise or a Wedding?