

THE FUNERAL AND THE FURNACE

(Why Hell?)

Beloved friends and family,
Who, with us, gather here,
We've sadly come to say goodbye
To one who's been so dear,

Who leaves behind his current wife,ⁱ
A stepchild who is grown,
Two daughters and three grandchildren,
To whom his love was shown.

He blessed them all abundantly,
By meeting many needs,
And taught them how to win at life,ⁱⁱ
So they too, could succeed.

For he'd become a wealthy man,ⁱⁱⁱ
He did it through hard work,
No occasion for advancement,
This man would ever shirk.

And being quite religious, he
Would often help the poor,
He said that he was doing great,
If God was keeping score.^{iv}

So now he is so happy and
He's free from all the pain,
For once our lives are over here,
Then all our troubles wane.^v

So, let's rejoice for such a life,
And learn from his success,
And seek to follow in his steps,^{vi}
Accepting nothing less.

// Now as his friends and family,
Disperse, each to their car,
The crematory is prepared,
For a very special jar.

// Meanwhile in another realm, where
The fire is always lit,^{vii}
He hears another weeping from^{viii}
The blackness of the pit.^{ix}

He quiets and strains to gain control,
By gnashing hard, his teeth,^x
In this sulfuric furnace, that^{xi}
True justice did bequeath.

Then, he calls out, "Hey, who is there?"
The answer comes, "I AM!"^{xii}
He asks, "So, You are everywhere—^{xiii}
The abode of the damned?"^{xiv}

// God answers, "It's the hardest part
Of being 'just' and 'love,'^{xv}
Of being 'omnipresent' and
Of ruling from above.

To watch all you, whom I have made,^{xvi}
Rebel against my laws,^{xvii}
Injuring and destroying,^{xviii}
With Satan's great applause.^{xix}

And know that most will not repent,^{xx}
And turn to Me for grace,^{xxi}
They'll reject my death for them^{xxii}
And end up in this place.

Yet, with no fear of punishment,^{xxiii}
More wickedness would thrive^{xxiv}
And evil would so overwhelm,
That no one would survive,

Plus, none would ever turn to Me,
To ask Me to forgive,^{xxv}
So they could be my children and
In paradise we'd live.^{xxvi}

Like you, their pride would stop them,^{xxvii}
They'd ignore the truth within^{xxviii}
And offer me some useless works,^{xxix}
In hopes they could get in."

/// Then, choking back another moan,
Still trying not to cry,
He yells at God, "What good was this?
Come on and tell me why!

Why did You give us all free-will?
You knew that we would sin,^{xxx}
And You would have to die for us,^{xxxi}
Or this would be our end!"

// "I did it for your grandparents,
Your stepchild, whom I know,
And your great, great grandchildren,^{xxxii}
Who'll too, be white as snow."^{xxxiii}

For each of them will turn to Me,^{xxxiv}
For cleansing by my blood^{xxxv}
For in a life that's full of sin,
It washes like a flood."

// "But, what about my daughters and
My first and second wife?
Will they choose You and Heaven, will
They have eternal life?"

// "Sadly, they will follow you to
This just and dreadful place,
That's partly why I'm weeping, for
Their sin and their disgrace.

Like you, they worship money and
Their pride will be their fall,^{xxxvi}
Like you, their professed need for Me,
It is so very small."

// "Oh, please, then let me warn them,
Please send me back again,
If they could see me now, they'd know
It's not the way to win."

// "No, sadly, that would do no good,^{xxxvii}
They have my Holy Word,
But, to them, it's but a trinket,
They view it as absurd."^{xxxviii}

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- ⁱ I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery." Matthew 19:9
- ⁱⁱ What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Matthew 16:26
- ⁱⁱⁱ When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" Luke 18:23-24
- ^{iv} There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death. Proverbs 14:12
- ^v Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Daniel 12:2
- ^{vi} Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit." Matthew 15:14
- ^{vii} "Then he will say to those on His left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.' Matthew 25:41
- ^{viii} As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. Luke 19:41-42
- ^{ix} And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 25:30
- ^x The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 13:49
- ^{xi} But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters, and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. Revelation 21:8
- ^{xii} God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" Exodus 3:14 / "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" John 8:58
- ^{xiii} Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. Psalm 139:7-8 / But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven cannot contain you. 1 Kings 8:27
- ^{xiv} He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. Revelation 14:10,11
- ^{xv} He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he. Deuteronomy 32:4 / God is love. 1 John 4:16
- ^{xvi} So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27
- ^{xvii} There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, Romans 3:23
- ^{xviii} Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—Romans 5:12
- ^{xix} You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. John 8:44
- ^{xx} Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. Matthew 7:13-14
- ^{xxi} For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8-9
- ^{xxii} Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him. John 3:36
- ^{xxiii} "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. Proverbs 9:10
- ^{xxiv} When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out, the hearts of the people are filled with schemes to do wrong. Ecclesiastes 8:11
- ^{xxv} [*** The author of this poem would not be going to Heaven, if he hadn't been scared of going to Hell.]
- ^{xxvi} Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43
- ^{xxvii} In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God. Psalm 10:4

^{xxviii} Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them. Romans 2:14-15

^{xxix} All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; Isaiah 64:6

^{xxx} All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Psalms 139:16

^{xxxi} For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. 1 Peter 3:18

^{xxxii} . . . I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. Exodus 20:5-6

^{xxxiii} ISA 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;

^{xxxiv} Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, Acts 3:19

^{xxxv} In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. Hebrews 9:22

^{xxxvi} Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. Proverbs 16:18

^{xxxvii} If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead. Luke 16:31

^{xxxviii} For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 1 Corinthians 1:18