

perhaps, heard of "McClintock and Strong's Biblical Cyclopedia," a work that has found some favor among the clergy of his church. In that, *Gehenna* is said to be "the Greek representative of the Valley of Hinnom, or, of the son, or children of Hinnom, a deep, narrow glen to the south of Jerusalem." Now, this being the *primary* application of the word, we have the right to be told just when, and by what authority, and under what circumstances, it came to designate the abode of damned spirits, and further, what that abode was called *before* it took this name. And this is just what no one seems ready to tell us.*

I ask you to note one thing concerning the authorities I quote. They are all believers in the eternity of evil, and hence their opinions should have the greater weight. Evidence given against one's own side of the case is doubly convincing.

But vastly more important than these words signifying place, are those held to express the eternal duration of the punishment prepared for the wicked in the life beyond the grave.

I was surprised to hear our brother say that he "understands Universalists to take their strong ground on *aion*." On the contrary, we understand that the advocates of the eternity of evil maintain that this word conclusively proves the truth of their position. We base our faith on the revealed character and promises of God, and simply undertake to show that this Greek word proves nothing inconsistent with it. Our brother says that *aion* and its derivatives denote absolute eternity, and quotes a long list of authorities to establish his position. But it was hardly candid in him not to say that they also mean much less than this, many times. He knew that there is high authority for saying that "the use of these terms in other passages of Scripture shows that they who understand them in a limited sense when applied to punishment, put no forced interpretation upon them."

He knew that they are translated into English in our Bible by the different words—"never," "ancient," "age," "eternal," "for ever," and "world." We know that when Jonah said "The earth was about me with her bars for ever," the "for ever" spoken of was of seventy-two hours' duration only. He knew that at the beginning of the discourse in which Christ said, "These shall go away into *aionion* punishment," his disciples had asked, "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the *end* of the *aion*," using the noun from which the adjective rendered everlasting is derived, and which, he says, means eternity.

*It has been shown by competent testimony that the "Hebrews had no word for Hell." It is worth while further to call the reader's attention to the fact that the word *Gehenna* is first found applied to a place of punishment after death, in writings belonging probably to the third Christian century. Although the Pharisees of Christ's time believed in the existence of such a place, they never speak of it by this name. Neither Philo nor Josephus use the word, though both of them refer to the subject. Philo describes the place as "a dark region covered with profound night and perpetual blackness." This seems to have been the common belief of the Pharisees. But *Gehenna* was a place of fire.