

Matthew 13:50

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Analysis

And shall cast them into the furnace of fire (βαλοῦσιν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν κάμινον τοῦ πυρός)—This exact phrase appears in 13:42, creating a thematic link between the wheat/tares and dragnet parables. The κάμινος (furnace) was a smelting furnace, not a mere cooking fire, emphasizing intensity and purpose. The future tense βαλοῦσιν ('they will cast') underscores the certainty, not mere possibility, of final judgment.

There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth (ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων)—This formula appears seven times in Matthew (8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28). Κλαυθμός denotes audible lamentation, while βρυγμός (gnashing) indicates rage, remorse, or anguish. The article ('the wailing...the gnashing') suggests characteristic, unceasing responses to conscious punishment. This refutes annihilationism—there must be continued existence for continued anguish.

Historical Context

The imagery of fiery judgment was familiar from Daniel 3:6 (Nebuchadnezzar's furnace) and Isaiah 66:24 ('their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched'). In Second Temple Judaism, Gehenna (ge-hinnom, valley of Hinnom) became the dominant metaphor for final judgment, referencing the valley south of Jerusalem where refuse burned continually and where child sacrifice once occurred under apostate kings.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How should the doctrine of conscious eternal punishment affect your prayer life and evangelistic zeal?
2. Why is Jesus—the most loving person who ever lived—also the most explicit teacher of hell in Scripture?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	βαλοῦσιν	αὐτοὺς	εἰς	τὴν	κάμινον	τοῦ	πυρός·	ἐκεῖ
And	shall cast	them	into	G3588	the furnace	G3588	of fire	there
G2532	G906	G846	G1519		G2575		G4442	G1563
ἔσται	ὁ	κλαυθμὸς	καὶ	ὁ	βρυγμὸς	τῶν	ὀδόντων	
shall be	G3588	wailing	And	G3588	gnashing	G3588	of teeth	
G2071		G2805	G2532		G1030		G3599	

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 8:12 (Parallel theme): But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 13:42 (Parallel theme): And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.