The issue of the reality of hell in the teaching of the Catholic Church

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ABSTRACT

One of the foundations of the Christian faith is the truth about eternal life. All people are well aware that life on earth will end sometime. Death is the end of earthly existence, but it is not the end definitive. As Christians, we believe that death is the beginning of a new life, a transition to a new reality, a reality that will never end and will pass away. God, offering us salvation through Jesus Christ, wants that for every person this new existence is heaven, where He will be the greatest reward. The creator, however, does not deprive man of free will and the possibility of deciding his fate, which is why he accepts the unreasonable possibility of rejection by the creatures of his proposal of heaven and self-grieving of man, that is, the voluntary election of the eternal punishment of hell. The object of reflection of this article is to present a modern teaching about the eternal punishment, called hell. It is shown what today's theology talks about the reality of eternal damnation. The truth about hell is the dogma of our faith. Often, however, this topic is not addressed in preaching and teaching. There is no doubt that this is a difficult subject because it concerns a reality that transcends human existence and is difficult to understand, but that does not mean that one should stop being interested in hell.

Keywords: hell, the final judgment, condemnation, eschatology, Catholic Church

1. INTRODUCTION

Belief in eternal life is the last article of the Christian profession of faith. The Catholic Church teaches that eternal life is a gift of Jesus Christ offered on the Cross, and death is the
gateway to him. The moment of death, which does not bypass any man, is for believers sometimes a transition from this world to the reality of eternal life. Even death can not destroy this reality. This reality is possible only thanks to Him who overcame death and all evil threatening man, by the power of his blood, shed on the cross [1]. Questions about eternal life, what it will look like, have always intrigued man and stimulated discussion. This curiosity is in a way inscribed in human nature. This indicates that a person is aiming for something greater to something that transcends it. As Christians, we know that this striving is to return to the eternal homeland that is in God.

The issue of the reality of condemnation called hell is worth addressing, because it concerns eternal life, which - as Jesus said - we have to look first, and everything else will be added to us (see Mt 6, 33). We choose eternal life, hell or heaven now. Already here on earth we decide how our eternity will look like.

Even today, the ultimate reality is ours, because today we can be in communion with God, or be disconnected from God. Eternal life is not a reward for the hard work and well-lived life on earth, but we live our eternal life right now. Therefore, the reality of eternal life, which may also turn out to be hell, should be the source of our constant concerns and considerations [2]. (Picture 1).

![Stephan Lochner “The final judgment”](image.jpg)
2. HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The following are important results:

313 yr. Edict of Milanski authentic in vain in the Roman Empire and the end of the persecution of Christians.

315-403 yr. Epiphanius of Salamis destroyed the colorful image of Christ because he recognized the painting of saints as a new kind of biblical valor. Unpack yourself for a movement that opposes sacred art - or iconoclasm.

325 yr. Council of Nicaea I under the leadership of Emperor Constantine. Formulating special time Christmas "movers", recognized in Roman Catholicism until the present day.

380 yr. Adoption of the tradition of the official confession of the Roman Empire. Celebrated on April 25, the holiday "Sol Invictus" (the invincible sun) is replaced by Christmas. The persecution and murder of "not Christians" begin.

381 yr. The Council of Constantinople I. Faced with disputes in the Church, the religious identity of Nice. Raising the date of the higher Bishop of Rome and other Bishops.

385-406 yr. SW. Hieronim translated the Bible into Latin, so-called "Vulgate"

428 yr. The new Patriarch of Constantinople - Nestorius, rejecting in relation to the Bible "the mother of Christ" (literally we read in the Bible about the mother of Jesus).

431 yr. The Council of Ephesus, convened quickly, under the leadership of Cyril - Bishop of Alexandria, exclusively for the followers of the Egyptian and Roman system. It was a response against Nestorius in the title of Maria - Jesus' part THE THEATOKOS - the mother of God. In a very short time, explained, finished the first Marian office "On God's Motherhood of Mary", to which the next Marian dogmas are quoted at the beginning. It is time to acknowledge the emission nowadays: "Mother of God", "Mother of God"; (in the Bible, reading only and applications of "Mary - the mother of Jesus").

440-461 yr. The pontificate of Leon and the Great. He tried to introduce the primacy of Rome during the equivalent rule of the church circles (Pentarchia), reaching in support of this as the first bishop of Rome to the Gospel of Matthew 16:18.

451 yr. Council of Chalcedon. Awarding the same dignity to the bishop of Constantinople and Rome (canon 28).

502 yr. The Roman synod announced that the Bishop of Rome was not subject to any court.

530 yr. Monk Dionizy Mały (zm.540r.) Calculated the date of the birth of Jesus and proposed accepting it as a year zero, which began to be accepted only in the middle of the eighth century

553 yr. The Council of Constantinople II. The second Marian dogma was proclaimed. For the first time on the Council it is said that Mary - the mother of Jesus, was not only the mother of God, but also bears the title "always a virgin" (point VI)

590-604 yr. The pontificate of Gregory the Great (monk), who was the only one who used the title of "servant servant" in his humiliated position.
649 yr. The Lateran Synod under the leadership of Marcin I confirms the Council's position from 553. talking about Maria, always a virgin.

680-681 yr. The Council of Constantinople III. He did not bring in anything fundamentally new, but only briefly confirmed the teachings of the two previous councils, mainly in the theme of the divine and human nature of Christ.

754 yr. Synod in Hierii (near Constantinople). 338 bishops opposed the cult of images. The 'Izydoryjskański Decree' ('Pseudo-Isidore Decree') was created, which, stirring the truth and falsehood, was supposed to prove the superiority of the bishop of Rome over other bishops and kings, formulating a new title - the pope, heads of the whole world (caput totius orbis). Instead of achieving the intended effect, it only contributed to strengthening the conflict between the Western and Eastern Church. The authenticity of the work was not undermined until the fifteenth century, and in the meantime the papacy has undergone an enormous strengthening.

855 yr. After the death of Leon IV, according to many chronicles from the 13th century a woman sat on the throne of the bishop of Rome - Joanna, to stay on the post for over two years, until she was unmasked and born. (a movie about "The Pope Joanna" was created on this topic)

869-870 yr. The Council of Constantinople IV. Ordering Roman legates to sign a document recognizing the superiority of their patriarchy over others. It provoked a sharp dispute with the emperor and other bishops. Eventually, the documents of the Council were later destroyed in the East, but in the West it was recognized, and after Eastern Schismast it was recognized as the 8th General Council.

882 yr. The murder of the bishop of Rome, John VIII, by oppositionists, headed by the bishop of Porto - Formozus, who was being banned by him. This was an introduction to the "saeculum obscurum" (meaning the dark century).

896 yr. Synod of the dead, or one of the darkest incidents in the history of the Roman bishopric. Stefan VI ordered to exhume the body of the former bishop of Rome, Formosus, for his posthumous judgment (the body was planted in the synod room, and after reading the charges, his fingers were cut off and blessed, and then thrown into the Tbil river). In 897. Stefan VI was murdered, and his successor arranged the funeral ceremonies of the found body of Formozus in the river. The consequence of the trupe synod was the opening of the darkest century in the history of the Roman church - political and financial influences in filling the position of the Bishop of Rome and many murders, which without any doubt makes it impossible to claim any "apostolic succession".

1054 yr. As a result of the efforts of the bishop of Rome, East Schism came to power over the entire Church. Christianity shared this reason for the Eastern and Western Church - Orthodox and Roman Catholic.

1055 yr. The election of Victor II to the Bishop of Rome, which for the first time can be recognized and entitled "Pope," the head Roman Catholic Church.

1123-1139 yr. Introduction of the obligation to observe CELIBAT throughout the Roman Catholic Church, adopted at the Lateran Council I (canons 7 and 21). In more modern centuries (from about the ninth century) only such recommendations were made, accepted at local synods in some regions.
1198 yr. 37-year-old Innocent III is elected pope. For the first time in the history of the Church, this pope assigns himself a number of privileges and titles, announcing that he is: the deputy of Christ, the successor of Peter, God's anointer set between heaven and earth. Already in his coronation speech he also stated that he is the one who judges everyone, but he can not be tried by anyone. As every knee is supposed to bend before God, so all his people are guilty of boundless submission and obedience to his deputy on earth. He adopted the title "summus pontifex" (the highest priest) and "supremus princeps" (the greatest ruler).

Absolutism of Innocent III was fully expressed at the Lateraski Council IV (1215). His pontificate is considered a top achievement in strengthening the institution of the papacy, which happened very quickly, for only 150 years! (from 1055)

Innocent III strongly supported and continued the idea of crusades, organizing IV of them. The Pope subjugated most secular rulers to himself and had absolute power close to him.

1215 yr. Lateran Council IV. Formulation of the dogma of transubstantiation, the so-called "Transsubstance", meaning the real transformation of bread (wafer) into the body of Jesus and wine in the blood of Jesus, during the Mass.

1231 yr. The appointment by Grzegorz IX of "HOLY INQUISITION", an investigative and judicial institution, in order to quickly detect and punish people suspected of spreading heresy. The guilty did not have the opportunity to appeal, defend them, and were burned alive at the stake, as was decided. St. The Inquisition operated with varying intensity until the 19th century and in the 20th century it was renamed the Congregation of Saint. Office and ultimately the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

1264 yr. Introducing the ceremony of "Corpus Christi", established by Bull Urban IV.

1378-1417 yr. The Great Western Schism (also called the "papal") - at the same time the government exercised first two and later (from the Council of Pisa) three popes. In total, in the course of 39 years, the office was organized by as many as 8 popes! The final resolution of the conflict took place during the Council of Constance, at the end of which the Conclave was held, selecting Marcin V.

1439 yr. Announcement of the dogma about the existence of the CLEANER. As a result, the sale of indulgences appeared, which turned into the present Mass intentions for the dead. This idea was defied by Martin Luther in 1517.

1517 yr. Beginning of the REFORM. Announcement of 95 also by Martin Luther in Wittenberg. Its direct cause was the sale of indulgences for rescuing the financially finalized church finances, which was largely contributed by Leon X. The money was also intended for the construction of the largest basilica - St. Peter.

1854 yr. The third Marian dogma was proclaimed: "On the Immaculate Conception of Mary" (NPNMP)

1870 yr. The Dogma "ON POPE FAITHFUL" was introduced.

1910 yr. Unification of the sacrament and the First Communion celebration in the whole church and determination of one age of children joining him (minimum 7 years).

1929 yr. Establishment of the Vatican State.
1950 yr. The fourth Marian dogma "On the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (WNMP) was announced. Making 15.VIII a holiday, which replaced the "Feast of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary" which lasted from the eighth century in the Eastern Church (today Orthodox Church).

1996 yr. John Paul II in a letter to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences stated that Darwin's theory of evolution is more than just a hypothesis.

20 .... yr. (Outline of History of Religion "a collective work under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Józef Keller).

3. LEARNING ABOUT THE LAST THINGS

Just as the experience of death, like the state of purgatory and heaven, hell is a mystery. In contrast, however, from the hopes of the mystery of heaven and purgatory, hell is seen as a terrible and terrible secret, the mystery of eternal tragedy [3].

When we write or talk about the possible alarming finale of human life, we feel some embarrassment. Some contemporary writers define hell as a "scandal", "unfathomable mystery" and "a reality that is difficult to adequately capture, referring only to reason." Although hell is a terrible, difficult to understand and accept mystery, it is the truth of our faith, which one must humbly accept [4].

The issue of eternal damnation, which we call hell is extremely important in its existential dimension, because it refers to the eternal fate of man. Therefore, teaching about hell should be considered insightfully in all its multifaceted reality [5]. The original science of the future fate of man was associated with death, after which the destiny of all people was identical, all went to sheol.

In theology of the Fathers of the Church, the science of hell is taken in the aspect of its eternity and the type of penalties existing there. We have learned from the biblical revelation that hell is not the main message of Christ's salvific mission and preaching, but the dramatic possibility of rejecting the merciful God and the good news of salvation. In the theology of the Fathers of the Church, we can see that the drama of hell and the condemned is the total and eternal loss of God. In turn, the Church, in her teaching, gives us a clear answer, stating that hell exists and is a real possibility, and that this state lasts forever.

4. LEARNING ABOUT HELL IN THE HOLY BIBLE

In the mystery of Christ, the fate of every human being is illuminated. The Church in her teaching states that hell, as well as its eternity, are a fact. Souls who leave this world in a state of mortal sin immediately after the trash go to hell, where they are faced with eternal suffering. God's punishment consists in eternal separation from God [6]. In a clear and clear way it can be seen that the Scriptures and the teaching of the Church about hell are - as the Catechism confirms - a call for accountability and conversion (Picture 2).

Hell is a condition only for those who turn away from God and do not accept His love, and thus remain in this state for all eternity. This is eternal damnation that threatens all who die in a state of severe sin. All this is decided at the time of death. It is worth emphasizing, however,
that God does not wish hell to anyone, but man himself, through his choices, condemns himself to eternal damnation. It is not God who condemns man to hell, but man himself excludes himself from the condition of heaven. Thus he condemns to eternal prison in darkness, forever connected with torment and torture without any relief, break and comfort [7].

![Picture 2. Hieronim Bosch „Hell”](image)

According to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, the transformation of life is possible only in worldliness. Later there is no way to improve and convert. Only in Christ can hope be found out of the darkness of sin, because only He alone is the Savior of the world. He
is the only source to which we can direct to avoid the eternal punishment, which deprives man of a chance for eternal life and eternal happiness (Picture 3).

Picture 3. Botticelli „Hell”.

Hell is the loss of a saving relationship with God. It is a terrible torment for a man who for ever away from the Triune Love. In the Old Testament, it is called an underground place (see Genesis 37, 35), where nothing and no one can be seen (see Job 10, 22); the land of silence (see Ps 94,17), the kingdom from which there is no return (see Job 7,9) or an eternal prison (see Isaiah 24:22); it is a "place" that God knows (see Job 26: 6). Sheol was "a land of darkness and shadow of death, a country where dawn is a black night, where the shadow of death covers disorder, and light is a black night (cf. Hi 10,21)” [8] Similarly, a worm. From the very egining, he symbolized the sin and humiliation of man. On the basis of various studies, Władysław Kopaliński gives different meanings to this term. We meet, among others, meanness, laziness, destruction, death of the dead, eternal punishment, illness, anxiety, sadness and finally hell. It is also said about hell as a long death, which can not be broken in any way.

The New Testament shows hell as an abyss (see Luke 16:23), a fiery hell (compare Mk 9:44, Mt 5,22-29), a fiery furnace (see Mt 13,42-50), a lake of fire and sulfur (see Revelation...
19.20), eternal fire (see Mt 18, 8), the abyss (see Luke 8: 31), the place of torment (see Luke 16: 28), the dungeon of Tartarus (see 2 P 2, 4) and others. Looking at all these terms, we can conclude that hell is not something pleasant for man, but only leads him to ruin. It is a payment and it is eternal for committed sins. The rejection of God's love closes to eternal participation in joy and the next life with the Creator. In this way, man condemns himself to eternal abandonment without Him. [9]

The teaching that flows from the Old and New Testaments shows that after death there is a state of eternal punishment, which is the result of human action during life. An unconverted sinner, that is, who in his temporal life, having an eschatological direction by God's will, did not accept the gift of God's grace, condemns himself forever, that is, he becomes his own hell for himself.[10] Scripture counts with this possibility, which is why it tries to guard against its occurrence. Like the salvation he bears in the Scriptures - especially at St. John - the name of eternal life, so you can rightly call it an eternal death.

Basically, the Bible teaches the science of eternal life, but it also seeks to save people from eternal punishment, which he can receive. The danger lies in the fact that - being in a state of hell - man is forever without salvation, because he is a good that he definitively rejected. In addition, man loses the possibility of communication with God, which entails the loss of spiritual goods, which in heaven are associated with eternal happiness, for example, community with saints or learning the ways of God's providence. The punishment of hell is therefore not just any. It reaches not only the external sphere of the human being, but permeates its interior, or spirit. It is a great suffering that you can not get out of.

From the Biblical message, we learn that the Apostles asked the Lord Jesus whether all believers would be saved or only a few. As Czesław Stanisław Bartnik emphasizes, Christ did not give an answer to this question, at least they did not have such a response from the inspired book. Jesus preached the doctrine of the possibility of salvation or irreligion. As we read in the Bible, the will of God is "that all men may be saved" (1Tm 2,4). Revelation, however, does not decide who will be condemned and whether it will be a large number. As noted by the author quoted above, the question of the Apostles is repeated by the followers of Christ to this day. Theologians also try to answer the answers. And as usual, these answers are diverse.

5. THE PASSION OF CONDEMNATION

The first torment in hell is self-condemnation, which is associated with the rejection of God. Otherwise, it is also called the curse of God. With him is connected to despair, which consists in loss, and thus also hatred - as the fruit of this curse [11]. As the Lord Jesus Himself said: "Go away from me accursed" (see Mt 25: 41). The second torment is expressed by fire (see Mt 13, 41-42). This is a suffering that burns, but does not destroy, penetrates not only the body, but also the soul. He has something spiritual in himself, not only in his essence, but also in its effects. The image of fire means spiritual self-destruction, fixed for eternity and spiritual dwarfing (Picture 4).

Hellfire is called eternal only because it does not end. It is worth noting that the heat of hellfire exceeds all others because it is fueled by the breath of God. Another punishment that Jesus Christ himself spoke about is weeping (see Mt 24, 45). It is more internal and spiritual than external. All these images try to show us that the definitive loss of closeness with God is a tragic ruin of human existence and, consequently, one of the most severe human pains 5zq2\
The task of these descriptions is to convince a man that turning away from God is not only referring to grief and torture, but also what is most painful in its consequences - a loss of hope for salvation.

![Picture 4. Hans Memling “The final judgment”](image)

Jesus, however, did not come to earth to defeat a man or to throw him into hell. He came to "seek and save what was lost" (Lk 19, 10), but he can not force a man into heaven because he respects his freedom. God's message is still full of hope and promises eternal joy for the saved. Only in this perspective should we consider the reality of hell. Those in hell are not known to God, but they are strangers. For man, the most important thing is to know God and let him know us and want to acknowledge us at the end of time.

Hell is also a mysterious and real revelation of God-love, who "loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him would not perish but have eternal life" (Jn 3:16). This new perspective of looking at condemnation shows that everything depends on accepting or rejecting God's love [13]. We must therefore consider them in the light of the immeasurable love of the Triune God, who leaves us with a free choice: eternal life in happiness or in condemnation.

The Church believes both in the happiness of the just and in the punishment of hell, which will meet everyone who has turned away from God. He also believes that it will embrace the whole of man's being. Hell exists and takes away hope for the salvation of man, just as there is God's love and human freedom. Love does not impose itself, as is freedom, which can not
answer God. Despite this answer, God still loves a man who condemns himself to loneliness and misfortune.

Theology, however, is considering the possibility of mitigating the punishment of hell, which is connected with the "inequality of punishment". God allows us to alleviate the suffering of those who have drifted away from God's love, but it is not possible to soften the punishment to the point where hell ceases to exist. This is impossible because of the righteousness of God and the free decision of every man who chooses a state of damnation [14]. It should be emphasized that this last view is not a dogma of faith, but it can be described as a science generally accepted by the Church, based on numerous passages of the Holy Scriptures (see Mt 10,15, Rom 2,6, Ap 13,20).

The exclusion from the Kingdom of God and the deprivation of his participation in his joy forever constitutes a picture of hell outlined from the negative side, that is, from the one who says what the sinner will be deprived of. In addition to contact with God, one must also
take into account the participation in the eschatological feast, which he speaks of, among others the parable of wise and foolish virgins (see Mt 25:12). St. John emphasized that whoever does not believe the Son of God is unworthy to see eternal life. The state of hell is a negation of the state of heaven or, in other words, a man's loss of the right to have heaven [15], assuming that the sky is called eternal life, hell is called eternal death. We can already be sure that we will find ourselves in one of the states (Picture 5).

Man himself has already made a choice here on earth, how the state of mind will get after death. A man who lives without God, that is, rejecting him in his life, condemns himself to hell, and thus makes a conscious choice of frustration, making himself a subject suitable only to be cast into hellfire, that is, eternal damnation. This is the definite defeat of a man who was sentenced to eternal abode in such a state. The realization of this reality not only takes away the hope of salvation, but also "has the right to cause unbearable pain, decaying into all eternity, assuming that this defeat is beyond any possibility of repair.

6. LOSING HOPE

The truth about Christ's descent into hell has been interpreted differently over the centuries. There is no doubt that it is a mystery difficult to explain, because it concerns a reality that is completely unknown to us. Nevertheless, the above-quoted authors unequivocally state that modern theology sees in Christ's descent into hell above all a salvific event. Christ, descending into the abyss, appeared to the dead of all times, proclaiming his victory over death and satan. With reference to the reality of hell, the quoted theologians conclude that descent into hell has had an impact on this reality, somehow initiating its existence. Souls who did not choose God before, saw the evil of their choice.

The possibility of losing hope for salvation is very real because it fits into the dynamics of the relationship between the gift of grace and open freedom. By rejecting favors flowing from God throughout our lives, we ourselves make a choice for eternal life. God loves man to such an extent and he respects his freedom so much that he agrees that his love will be rejected and condemned. [16] The great love of God is manifested here, but also understanding and respect for man. Hell is open to those who consciously make a choice against God and confirm this choice with their deeds and attitudes. It is the effect of man's absence from the omnipresent and omnipotent God.

The idea of hope in the New Testament is contained mainly in the gospels, especially in the preaching of Jesus. This is particularly evident when he speaks of the last days, the arrival of the eschatological Kingdom of God and the parody of the Son of Man. The good news that Christ proclaims is a very important message for those who listen to it. Jesus proclaims a kingdom that has eschatological characteristics: it is close (see Mk 1:15), it is among us (see Luke 17:20), but it appears unexpectedly (see Luke 12.39). In the synoptic gospels we find joy that supports human weakness. It's about "knowing that there is one who also escorts me in death and whose stick and stick give me comfort, so that I will not get angry, it has become a new hope that is rising in the lives of believers."

The New Testament calls for eschatological hope. The term is used, "as in Mk 15,43; Lk 2,25; 12.36; 23.51, to signify the expectation of the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of the Lord." Her reference is not only judgment on the last day or resurrection. We understand the Kingdom of God and the final victory over Satan, which has already begun. The man of hope
accepts the words of Jesus seriously: "Behold, I am with you all the days, until the end of the world" (Mt 28:20) and refers these words to herself. You have to believe it; with faith and hope, accept His Good News of the Kingdom.

The New Testament argues that "the believer is born into hope", to enter into a close relationship with Christ. It is connected with placing hope in the grace that Christ gives. He came to people to stimulate the hope that they would become a living hope. All difficulties can be overcome only in hope, thanks to the basis of your life on Jesus. This explains that "for Christians, the principle of hope is the person of Jesus Christ and His message." Once again, the person of Jesus is shown as the basis of Christian faith and hope.

Jesus in four gospels, especially the gospel according to Saint. Łukasz, is constantly on the road on which he wants to meet a man. He constantly strengthens the hope in his disciples: For human anger, jealousy and hatred, which touch Jesus and pose a serious threat to all who, thanks to him, regained hope, Jesus on the way to Jerusalem, and above all in Gethsemane and on Calvary, corresponds to an infinite love for a human being. It shows that he has been a model of human relations and relationship with God for man. The end of human hope is not the death of Jesus (Picture 6).

Picture 6. Anniversary of the Eucharistic event in Poland.

In order to save yourself from the punishment of hell, and thus against the hopes of salvation, one should not stop only in focusing on not letting mortal sins, but also fight against evil tendencies and avoid dangerous opportunities for sin. It is about applying for a holy and Christian life that is consistent with the teachings of Jesus Christ himself. It is worth fighting
for your salvation and for not destroying your own life. Unfortunately, only the condemned man discovers that he has lost God by his own fault; it is extremely bitter to say that his rejection of God and hatred for him are irreversible. It is sad, but the hell roots man in evil forever, depriving him of eternal happiness and joy [17]. At the gates of hell there is only one inscription: entrance; there is no way out of it. Bearing in mind the possibility of total and eternal loss of hope of salvation, or hell, it should be emphasized that the biblical basis from which we left, and the tradition of the Church do not contain the statement of any man who has been condemned and lives forever in hell. It is only a real possibility of condemnation [18].

7. CONCLUSIONS

In modern eschatology and soteriology a breakthrough has taken place. It has changed to look at God as a strict Judge. In addition, these fields reject the juridical and penitentiary language in the description and interpretation of the Detailed Court, which will take place immediately after death and the Final - at the end of history [19]. The eschatology of hope is more evident at the expense of the eschatology of fear. The idea of universal salvation is becoming less and less foreign. Hell exists, regardless of whether someone believes in them or negates them. The existence of eternal punishment is a dogma of the Catholic faith. This truth was revealed by God, and the Catholic Church constantly preaches it and reminds the faithful [20]. Teaching about the punishment of eternal damnation is a talk about supernatural and eternal reality. Unfortunately, no one in the world can express or comprehend great eternal truths. If the Bible teaches about heaven that "the eye has not seen, neither the ear has heard, nor the heart of man has been able to comprehend how great things God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Corinthians 2: 9), so too - according to the author quoted above, no one can understand what awaits for incorrigible sinners. Just like heaven, the science of hell is presented in metaphorical language. We know and understand that this is a completely different reality from the mundane. That is why what we say and think about this reality is more unlike anything similar to our present reality. This fact, however, does not absolve us from trying to speak and learn about the nature of this terrible reality called hell. When we contemplate the study of eternal hell, we often feel spontaneous questions that arise spontaneously: Is it possible to reconcile God's mercy with the eternal suffering of the damned? If God's will is for man's salvation, can there be a state of condemnation? Why can not the condemned person change his condition? These questions require serious consideration and the answers to them are not easy at all.

References


