

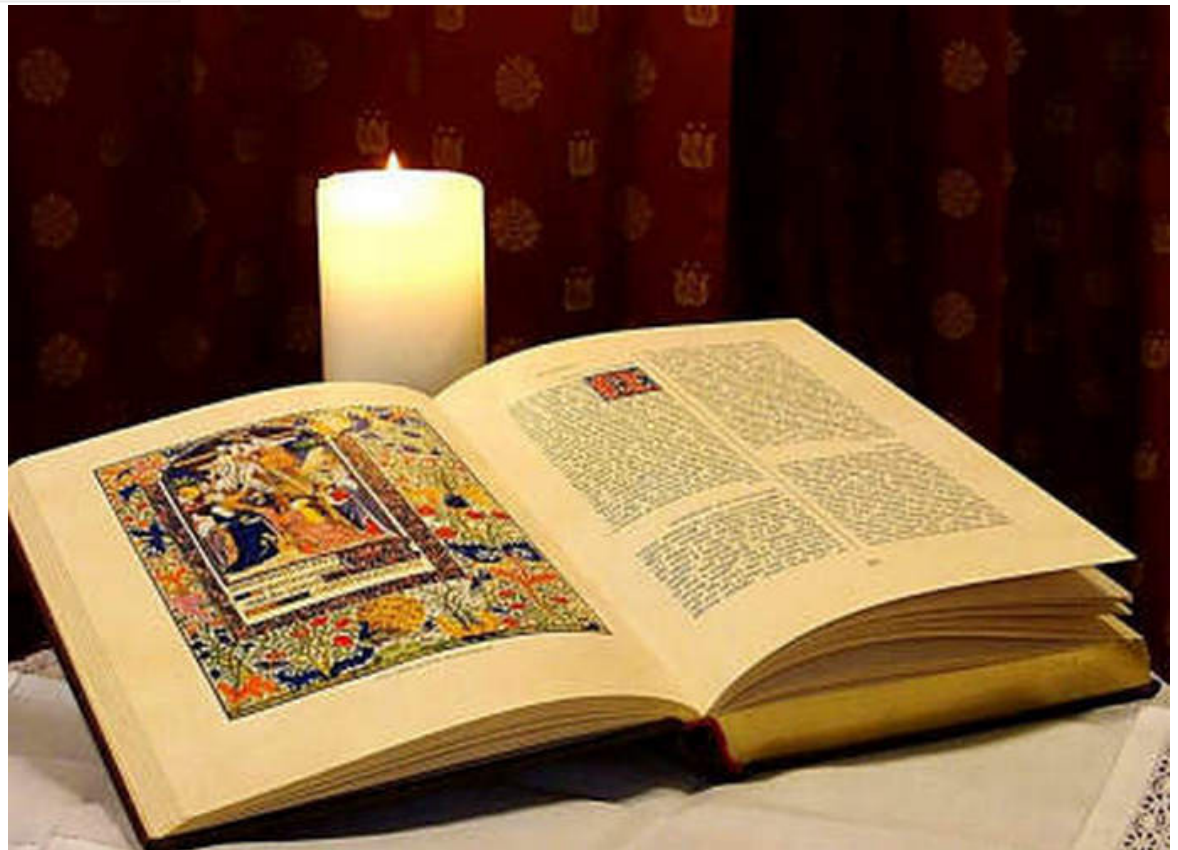
**GOSPEL PEARLS**

## Straight to hell

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**GOSPEL PEARLS**

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*Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and*

*withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. (John 15: 1-8)*

The branches bearing no fruit are those who haughtily believe that they can separate themselves from God and yet continue to do good deeds on their own. Yet such branches are also like those who hide their God-given gifts under the illusion that they can save themselves without doing good deeds. This is how we end up going straight to hell because, as such, God cuts us down like useless branches. May we remain wary of our sins of omission toward God and our neighbours He has placed in our lives.