

July 3, 2022

What Does The Bible Say About Hell?

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There is a place called hell! Jesus pointed out emphatically that there is one who is able to cast into hell. *“Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in **hell**”* (Matt. 10:28). Since we can be cast into hell, then certainly no one would deny that there is such a place.

The word **hell** is mentioned in the Bible several times. There is more than one meaning of the word *“hell”* as it is given in the King James version of the Bible. However, every time the word *Gehenna* is translated from the Greek language into the English word *“hell,”* it signifies a place of eternal punishment where is burning fire.

Hell is certainly an unpleasant subject and unpleasant to think about, yet we need to study and find out what the Bible says about it, so that we will be able to shun such a terrible place in judgment.

Jesus Knew About Hell

In the book of Matthew, chapter five, verse 22 we read: *“But whosoever shall say thou fool shall be in danger of **hell fire**.”* In Matt. 5:29-30 we read the words of Jesus when He said: *“And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that the whole body should be cast into **hell**.”* In Matt. 23:33, we read of the scathing rebuke that Jesus gave the Scribes and Pharisees. He said, *“Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of **hell**?”* Certainly Jesus left no doubt that such people would be cast into hell.

The Character Of Hell

(1) It is the dwelling place of the devil and his angels. *“Then shall he say also unto those on the left hand, Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”* (Matt 25:41). Hell was prepared *“for the devil and his angels,”* not man. Heaven was prepared for man. If one fits himself for companionship with the devil he will be assigned to that destiny.

(2) Hell is a lake of fire. In Rev. 21:8 a list of the inhabitants is given and it is said of them that they *“shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.”* We read where some would be cast into this lake of fire. *“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire”* (Rev. 20:15). Surely no one would want to go to hell, but most of earth’s population shall (Matt.7:13,14).

(3) Hell is a place of eternal damnation. Matthew 25:41 refers to it as

“everlasting fire.” In the same chapter Jesus said, *“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal”* (Matt. 25:46). The same word which states that there shall be everlasting life also is used to point out everlasting punishment. Therefore, the punishment is to be as long as the reward for the faithful. The punishment of the wicked is without remedy; God will not change the punishment. We are assured that the state and condition of all men will be eternal. The pains of hell will never end (Isa. 33:14; Heb. 6:2).

(4) Eternal destruction from the face of the Lord. Those who will be punished in hell will be cast from the presence of the Lord. *“Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power”* (2 Thess. 1:7-9). We need it impressed upon our minds that hell is real! We also need to realize that hell is the place waiting for those who do not obey the gospel, and for those who continue in sin.

(5) Hell is pictured as a place of outer darkness. *“Children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness”* (Matt. 8:12). This is a great contrast to heaven, for in heaven there is light. *“And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it. And the Lamb is the light thereof”* (Rev. 21:23). The Word of God even tells how dark it will be: *“To whom he reserved the blackness of darkness forever”* (Jude 13).

(6) Hell is described as a place of sorer punishment. It will be sorer punishment than under Moses’ law. *“He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses”* (Heb. 10:28). So death was the penalty under that law. But the next verse (v 29) says, *“Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”* The punishment is worse in proportion as Jesus is greater than Moses, and the New Covenant is better than the Old (Heb. 7:22).

(7) The Second Death. *“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death”* (Rev. 20:14). The first death is a separation of the body from the spirit (Jas. 2:26). The **second** death is a parting of the spirit from God, suffered by all who have rejected Him (Rev. 21:8). Oh, how we dread physical death on earth. Therefore we ought to dread the second death much, much more!

(8) There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. *“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of the kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. And they shall cast them into a furnace of fire; There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth”* (Matt. 13:41-42). This is a place of wailing and gnashing of teeth, lamenting, crying, and moaning. The weeping and gnashing of teeth represent intense suffering; they shall weep because they have lost their favor with God, and shall gnash their teeth because others have obtained it.

The Suffering Which

Must Be Endured

The story of the rich man and Lazarus gives us a glimpse of the unseen world. At death Lazarus was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. At death the rich man lifted up his eyes in Hades. At death their destinies were sealed and so will ours be. When the rich man died, *"In Hell (hades) he lifted up his eyes."* This word *"Hades"* means the unseen world, the abode of departed spirits, whether good or bad. Abraham's bosom, a place of joy, represents the location of Lazarus, and *"tormented in these flames"* gives the location of the rich man.

(1) The rich man had sight. *"And in Hell he lifted up his eyes and saw Lazarus afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."* After death the rich man was conscious and rational. The rich man was in misery, and Lazarus is among the blessed and happy.

(2) The rich man had desire. He offered two petitions, one for himself and one for his five brethren (Luke 16:24,27). The rich man prayed first for himself to Abraham, and his second request is for his five brethren. He thought that they might come to that place of torment. He asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his brother's house. He knew that he could not escape from this place to go and warn his brethren, but he relied on the mercy of Abraham to *"send Lazarus."* He did not want his five brethren to come to his doom. Abraham answered, *"They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them"* (Luke 16:29). They should take heed to hear Moses and the prophets. We have Christ and the apostles; we must hear them if we want to be saved.

(3) The memory of the rich man was kept alive (Luke 16:25). *"Remember"* will be a fearful word at this time. Memory will keep alive the unpleasant as well as the pleasant. The rich remembered that in his earthly life he had received the good things and Lazarus the evil things. He had enjoyed not only the necessities of life, but an abundance of luxuries, while Lazarus had not enjoyed the meager necessities of life. The memory of wasted opportunities we had in our earthly life will be a terrible thing.

(4) The rich man experienced torment and anguish. The rich man agonized in the misery of his punishment. At death destinies are determined; there can be no further preparation, passage from one side to another will be impossible. "Being in torments" represents the place where the rich man had gone. He begs for relief for his suffering. *"He cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame"* (Luke 16:23). He is continually tormented. Our minds shrink back aghast at the horrible punishment.

One thing which we should remember when we think of the hereafter, the Bible does not teach that there is a middle ground for the unbeliever who dies lost. We shall enter a place of happiness or a place of punishment. Since this is the case, it behooves us to search the Scriptures and see what we must do in order to enter into the realm of the saved that we might receive the eternal reward when life is over.

What is **your** hope of eternal reward? Are **you** looking forward to the time when

Jesus shall come and you shall go with him to a place of happiness? What preparation have you made for life beyond the grave? If you have made no preparation you must: **Hear** the gospel of Christ, and **believe** it with all your heart, **repent** of past sins and be **baptized** for the remission of sins. We would be happy to aid you in your search for the truth that heaven may be your home when this life is over.
