

HELL

A Bible Study
Researched and Taught by
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Hell is one of those subjects that make people uncomfortable. We hear stories of hell being a place of fire, demons, and endless torment. Throughout history many authors have written about it, Dante's Inferno for example. Western culture is very familiar with the concept. Even Hollywood has made it the subject of many movies. Whatever the context, whatever the belief, hell is definitely taught in the Bible. But even the doctrine of hell is not without its controversy. Some say it is only the grave with no consciousness. Others say it is a place of correction and punishment that is not eternal. Others say it is an endless agonizing punishment in fire. Whichever it is, hell is the total absence of the favor of God.

THE WORDS ASSOCIATED WITH HELL

Gehenna

In the OT, the word for hell is 'ge-hinnom' meaning "Valley of Hinnom." It was a place to the southwest of Jerusalem. This place was once "called 'Topheth' and derived from an Aramaic word meaning 'fireplace.' It was here that some pagan kings practiced human sacrifice by fire ([2 Chron. 28:3](#); [33:6](#); [Jer. 7:31](#); [32:25](#))⁽¹⁾. This is probably why in the NT the word came to be associated with destruction by fire. The word 'gehenna' is found in the NT 12 times and every instance is spoken of by Jesus. In the NT, "gehenna" is used of a condition and never of a place.

Hades

This word only occurs in the NT, ten times, and corresponds to the OT word "sheol." Jesus uses the word four times: [Matt. 11:23](#); [16:18](#); [Luke 10:15](#); [16:23](#). The other six occur in [Acts 2:27,31](#); [Rev. 1:18](#); [6:8](#); [20:13,14](#).

It was probably the "subterranean abode of all the dead until the judgment. It was divided into two departments, paradise or Abraham's bosom for the good, and Gehenna or hell for the bad."⁽²⁾ In particular, in the account of Lazarus and the Rich man of ([Luke 16:19-31](#)), it is the place of the conscious dead who are wicked.

Sheol

"The Hebrew word *Sheol* is probably derived from a root "to make hollow," and was seen as the common receptacle of the dead and in the great many places the word appears in the OT, it is referring to the grave.⁽³⁾ It is a place and is mentioned in [Gen. 37:35](#); [Num. 16:30,33](#); [Psalm 16:10](#), etc. Sheol has many meanings in scripture: the grave, the underworld, the state of the dead. It was supposed to be below the surface of the earth ([Ezek. 31:15,17](#); [Psalm 86:13](#)).

THE DEAD ARE CONSCIOUS AFTER DEATH

The wicked descend alive into Sheol

[Num. 16:30](#), "But if the Lord brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have spurned the Lord . . . ³³So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly."

Cast to outer darkness with weeping and gnashing of teeth

[Matt. 8:12](#), "but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Those cast into the fire suffer consciously

[Matt. 13:41-42](#), "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, ⁴²and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." See also [Matt. 13:50](#).

Cast into a tormenting fire

[Rev. 14:9-11](#), "And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, ¹⁰he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹"And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.'" See also, [Rev. 21:8](#).

HELL IS A PLACE OF ETERNAL FIRE AND PUNISHMENT

Unquenchable Fire

[Matt. 3:12](#) "And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Fiery Hell

[Matt. 5:22](#), "whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell." See also, [Matt. 5:29,30](#).

Fiery Hell

[Matt. 18:8-9](#), "And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the eternal fire. ⁹"And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out, and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into the fiery hell."

Eternal Fire

[Matt. 25:41](#), "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels."

Eternal Punishment

[Matt. 25:46](#), "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

The word 'eternal' in both places is "aionios" which means 1)without beginning and end, that which always has been and always will be; 2)without beginning; 3)without end, never to cease, everlasting. The word 'punishment' is the word kolasis and it means "to punish, with the implication of resulting severe suffering - 'to punish, punishment.'"⁽⁵⁾

Eternal Fire

[Jude 7](#), "Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire."

Lake of Fire

[Rev. 20:15](#), "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

HELL....IS IT REAL?

Jesus endured Hell when he bore the sins of the entire world when he was crucified and God turned his back on him. **Matthew 27:46 - "Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani? that is to say, MY GOD, MY GOD WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?"**

Why was Hell created? **"the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:41** Lucifer was the first sinner and he, along with a third of the angels, were cast out of heaven.

Do Satan and his angels currently reside in the lake of fire? Surprisingly, the answer is no. Most people have this image of Satan as a little red devil with a pitchfork tormenting souls in hell. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Bible tells us that Satan has access to the throne of God. **JOB 1:6&7 "One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming through the Earth and going back and forth in it."**

Satan not only has access to the throne of God, he also roams the earth. Scripture refers to Satan as **"The god of this age (world)" 2 Corinthians 4:4 In Galatians 1:4 Paul calls our age "evil".**

What is Satan doing right now? For those who will not go to hell (having their sins washed away by the shed blood of Jesus Christ) Satan stands before God and accuses them day and night. **See Revelation 12:10**

For those who have rejected Jesus as Lord and Savior, **Satan prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." 1 Peter 5:8**

Is Hell a real place or just something used by bible thumping preachers to scare people into attending church? In fact, many of today's preachers are instructed to not preach about hell because the people don't believe in it. This is contrary to what the Bible teaches.

Is Hell Real? - Is It Punishment For The Wicked?

The question, "Is hell real?" is answered "no" by a lot of people. These people would like to believe that when we die, we don't go to a heaven or a hell, we simply cease to exist. However, wouldn't a God who sends us into nonexistence at death be just as "cruel" as one who allows us to freely choose our own destiny, which could be hell? Even atheist Friedrich Nietzsche said that he would rather choose eternally conscious suffering than nonexistence.

God's perfect justice also demands that there be a hell to punish the unrepentant and wicked among us. As Walter Martin said about the existence of hell and eternal punishment in his book, *The Kingdom of the Cults*, "They make much to-do about God being Love but forget that because He is Love, He is also Justice and must require infinite vengeance upon anyone who treads underfoot the precious blood of Christ, who is the Lamb slain for lost sinners from the foundation of the world."

What kind of a loving God would He be if the wicked were never punished? Why would He have sent His Son to die for our sins, if we could reject that redemption and not eventually pay the price? What incentive would we have to do good and love God if we knew we could reject His Son and choose to do evil all of our lives and never be punished? We would not want this lack of justice in the streets of our cities and towns, so why do we expect God to meet it out in the overall universe?

As Beautiful as Heaven is that is how Horrifying HELL is.

Words cannot describe HELL and words cannot describe Heaven. Hell was created for the Fallen angels (demons) and satan. Hell was never made for human beings. The Horror of HELL is NOT only for those who are the Mass murderers or Hitler or the really EVIL of this world. But Hell is filled with people we love, and our neighbors and friends who give to Charities and are always there to lend a helping hand. People who we would say were GOOD people if they were judged by their works.

But, our Father God is PERFECTION. He demands HOLINESS and just being GOOD and measuring up to man's standards is NOT enough. We must measure up to perfection because breaking ONE commandment is breaking them ALL in GOD'S sight. ONE commandment broken is NOT worse than another one, it is only in Mankind's eyes. It is All SIN.