

The Scary Reality of Hell

Introduction

1. Does Hell really scare you?
2. I have talked to Christians who have fallen away and to individuals who have not been Christians, about the reality of Hell.
 - A. When one goes through life without thinking about Hell, then they are certainly going to spend an eternity there!
 - B. When one lays their head down at night knowing that they are in sin, and will go to hell if they die, and not be afraid, there is no hope of salvation.
3. Why is it that so many, and even some Christians don't think about Hell and the reality of it?
 - A. Perhaps, it may be, because we have neglected the old hell fire and brimstone preaching that was delivered in days past.
4. In this lesson, I want to revisit this old subject that may be somewhat "new" to some, but heard before by others. HELL - It should scare every single person!

Hell Is Real

1. Hell is not a fictitious story or myth. It is not a condition or state of mind. It is a real place!
 - A. Luke 16, which speaks of the realm of departed spirits (Hades and not the eternal abode), is a foretaste of greater things to come.
 - 1) The rich man spoke of this “place” of torment.
Luke 16:23, 28
 - 2) He was in a real place. It is merely a foretaste of worse to come for every single soul who finds themselves there when they immediately die.
2. Hell is just as real as heaven.
 - A. Heaven and Hell are often times put on an equality as far as their nature goes.

Matthew 25:46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

- 1) If Heaven is real, so is Hell. If Hell is a state of mind, then so is heaven.
- B. Jesus said we ought to fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matthew 10:28).
 - 1) In this we learn that
 - a. Hell should be feared.
 - b. It is beyond the grave.
 - c. It should motivate us to live so as to go to heaven.

All of these point to the reality of hell.

Hell Is Terrible

1. **Saying that Hell is terrible is putting it mildly!**
 - A. **It may be that some of those who believe in Hell think that the biblical descriptions of it are overstated.**
 - 1) **Surely it could not be as bad as the old fashion preachers used to say it would be.**
 - 2) **The following points tell us how terrible hell really is.**
2. **Gehenna.**
 - A. **The word Hell (when referring to the eternal abode of the wicked) is from the Greek word Gehenna. When we understand how that word came to be used to describe the eternal damnation, we will appreciate how tragic Hell really is.**
 - 1) **Gehenna points back to the Valley of Hinnom.**
 - a. **“Originally the Valley of Hinnom, near Jerus, Gehenna became among the Jews the synonym for the place of torment in the future life” (ISBE 1371).**
 - b. **“Gehenna is a transliteration from the Aram, “valley of Hinnom” (ISBE 1183).This valley was to the southwest of Jerusalem.**
 - c. **This valley was the seat of worship to the idol Molech. “That ‘the valley of Hinnom’ became the technical designation for the place of final punishment was due to two causes.**

- ◆ **In the first place the valley had been the seat of the idolatrous worship to Molech, to whom children were destroyed by fire.**

2 Chronicles 28:3 He burned incense in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, and burned his children in the fire, according to the abominations of the nations **whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.**

2 Chronicles 33:6 Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, **to provoke Him to anger.**

- ◆ **Secondly, on account of these practices the place was defiled by King Josiah.**

2 Kings 23:10 And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech.

- ◆ **It became in consequence associated in prophecy with the judgment to be visited upon the people**
Jeremiah 7:32
- ◆ **The sacrifice that was made to Molech was awful. Many texts tell of parents burning the sons and daughters to honor this idol.**
Jeremiah 7:30-31
Jeremiah 19:5-6
- ◆ **“The image of Molech was a human figure with a bulls head and outstretched arms, ready to receive the children destined for sacrifice. The image of metal was heated red hot by a fire kindled within, and the children laid on its arms rolled off into the fiery pit below” (ISBE 2075).**

- d. **The valley came to be used to burn the city's trash and rubbish. It was the city incinerator.**
 - ◆ **Jeremiah spoke of the valley of dead bodies and of ashes.**

Jeremiah 31:40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the Brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to the LORD. It shall not be plucked up or thrown down anymore forever.

- ◆ **“Into this valley dead bodies were probably cast to be consumed by the dogs...and fires were kept burning to consume the rubbish of the city. Such associations led to the ‘Gehenna’ becoming the ‘type of Hell’” (ISBE 1393).**

3. **Lake of fire.**

- A. **Hell is described as a lake that burns with fire and brimstone!**
Revelation 20:10, 14-15; 21:8

- 1) **Imagine a literal lake that you know. Picture that every drop of water were a flammable substance (i.e. gasoline). If that were set aflame, what would it be like to be thrown into the middle of it?**
- 2) **Brimstone is perhaps sulfur that melts and runs in streams. It spreads and is sticky. Picture that some sticky substance is poured all over you (i.e. honey or molasses). What if that were a flammable substance set aflame? Can you image the intense pain, the agony and the suffering?**

3) Other passages portray Hell as a furnace of fire.

Matthew 13:42 and will cast them **into the furnace of fire**. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

a. A flaming fire.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, **in flaming fire** taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

b. An unquenchable fire.

Mark 9:43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire **that shall never be quenched**—

4. Weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth.

A. Those who are cast into hell will be howling, crying aloud and grinding their teeth!

Matthew 13:50 and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be **wailing and gnashing of teeth.**"

Matthew 25:30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth.**'

B. What a picture of punishment! Hell Is Eternal!

- 1) These descriptions of Hell would be bad enough if it only lasted for a day or a even an hour. However, the pain and suffering of hell is eternal!

C. Jesus equated “hell fire” with “everlasting fire.”

Matthew 18:8-9 "If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.

D. In addition, Jesus contrasted the “everlasting punishment” with “eternal life”

Matthew 25:46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Conclusion

- 1. Hell is as long as heaven is.**
- 2. The smoke of torment ascends “forever and ever”**

Revelation 14:10-11 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

- 3. It really does scare me to think about Hell.**
 - A. It should scare you too!**
- 4. The gospel invitation offered.**

