

HELL, PART 2

September 7, 2025, Pastor Jerry

I'm sure that, like me, many of you have known really nice people who have not accepted God's gift of faith, see in Ephesians 2:8. They treat people with kindness and politeness, serving them in various ways to help them, demonstrating humility. Still, they do not worship God; in fact, they never even discuss God and are somewhat deterred when the subject comes up. But what will become of them? Are they evil or wicked, deserving of the fiery Lake?

What is the fiery lake? Will all those in Hell or Hades eventually be suffered to experience such an eternal fate? What does the Bible teach? First, let's look at two verses,

John 12:47-48: NIV. "If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. If we took only this verse, you might think that a good person might go to heaven based on the good they have done on earth. Now, let's add the next verse, 12:48: There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. It is a must that we take this verse in conjunction with John 3:18: "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Was there a judgment in 3:18, or is it a condemnation based on one's own personal choices? 12:48: sounds much like "belief" is key to a person's future. We have been given the opportunity to choose. Many choose not to believe, and that choice will play a role in their eternal life. People have struggled with Calvin's concept of irresistible grace, believing that God chooses who He will, regardless of whether the individual has responded to the gift of faith, and instead places them under some divine influence. As we look at the outcome on the day of judgment, we also witness the path that leads to eternal damnation, a place beyond suffering we can ever imagine.

I have known good friends and accomplished individuals in Scripture who have told me that we do not know or understand why God chooses whom He does. However, the Bible is a love letter from our creator that teaches us exactly who and why God chooses who He does. It is not the idea of irresistible grace or predestination. Nothing in the believer is working in person until they respond to the calling and acceptance of the gift of faith. I want to be very careful here; none of this is within our power.

Jesus said that when He was going away, He would send another. Unlike Jesus, who was not Omnipresent, the Holy Spirit would come and fill the believer.

John 14:15-17: “If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

It would be now that the destination of man would be sealed. We know that the man on the cross, next to Jesus, who had lived a rugged life, is now in his last hours; it is then that faith comes to the thief. What made the change? We find right away that this man is now headed to paradise. What I want is for us to see, although this man had lived a terrible life, that not being baptised, nor walked in humbleness, failed to put others first, and appearing to have rejected Jesus up until now, he still went to heaven where he is now with our Lord.

This is the part of the journey that many of our theologians have found difficult to reconcile with the concept of God’s grace and gentle heart, given the existence of a place like Gehenna. We have just looked at a couple of reasons people go to eternal suffering. It is not a nice place to think about going to, and that is by design.

People who question God’s place of eternal punishment are not doubting people, but people from all walks of believers, well learned, who have asked the question, “Why such a place. “

In the book, *Why Hell?* The author addresses both strong evangelists and studied theologians who find hell a place that demands a reasonable answer. John Stott, British theologian (1921–2011), is quoted as saying, “Emotionally, I find the concept [of eternal torment] intolerable.” And fellow theologian John Wenham, 1913-1996, wrote,

Unending torment speaks to me of sadism, not justice. It is a doctrine which I do not know how to preach without negating the loveliness and glory of God. From the days of Tertullian it has frequently been the emphasis of fanatics. It is a doctrine which makes the Inquisition look reasonable. It all seems a flight from reality and common sense.¹

Also, with a couple of names, you might be more familiar with.

The saddest day of my life was the day I watched my grandmother die. When that EKG monitor flatlined, I freaked out. I absolutely lost it! According to what I knew of the Bible, she was headed for a life of never-ending suffering. I thought I would go crazy. . . . Since that day, I have tried not to think about it. It has been over twenty years. Even as I write that paragraph, I feel sick. I would love to erase hell from the pages of Scripture. —Francis Chan²

¹ Gregg, Steve. *Why Hell?: Three Christian Views Critically Examined* (p. 20). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

² Gregg, Steve. *Why Hell?: Three Christian Views Critically Examined* (p. 19). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

There is no doctrine I would more willingly remove from Christianity than [hell], if it lay in my power . . . I would pay any price to be able to say truthfully: "All will be saved." —C. S. Lewis

For me? I don't think any of these men will suffer eternal suffering; they openly and verbally reject the thought of a gracious God placing people in such a place of torment, but they did not change one word of what has been written.

So, where does Hell or Hades stand in the power of the end times? We hear and have heard of hell most of our lives, and for many of us, it has been discussed as the final place of deserving judgment, but is it? What is Gehenna? It is an eternal place, not of this world we currently live in or on. It is a place of suffering, worse than what the rich man was experiencing when he asked Abraham to have Lazarus dip his finger in water and wet his lips. Would that fate not seem bad enough? Now we need to stop and straighten out the times we are talking about.

When Jesus came the first time and He said He did not come to Judge, what did He mean? But later, He says in **John 5:42: "Furthermore, the Father judges no one, but has assigned all judgment to the Son,"** So now we are approaching a time leading up to the final judgement, the casting of all who did not accept the Son's atoning sacrifice. As we look at this, we see there are two types of people: those who believe and are saved, and those who do not believe and are destined for eternal punishment. It is very cut and dry, as we see by the Scripture.

Sometimes we see the world around us as bad, the protests, the shootings, the crime of all sorts, a government that seems to be on the verge of outliving the freedoms we not so long ago cherished, and attacks by our government on Christian churches and groups. However, let's look at how it was before Christianity ever came into the world. The Hinnom Valley would later not only become a refuse for trash, but the Babylonians would use it to throw the bodies of the conquered into. There is more to this than I am writing of here, and it sheds more light on this valley and its importance in the cultic world.

Isaiah 66:24: Mark 9:26 "And they will go out and look on the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; the worms that eat them will not die, the fire that burns them will not be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind."

Dave Leach in *Hell's Aim and Heaven's Love* says this time frame and actions would still have to be on this earth and before the final judgment, since it depicts so much that is common to the Valley of Slaughter. Gehenna, referring to the Lake of Fire, was initially called the Valley of Hinnom. It was a place where refuse was burned, long after the valley had been the home of pagan worship, including Molech and Baal, Canaanite gods. Later, after millennia, the valley became known as the Valley of Slaughter.

"By at least the 1st century C.E. there emerged a metaphorical understanding of Gehenna as the place of judgment by fire for all wicked everywhere. The judgment of the wicked occurred either as a casting of their soul in Gehenna immediately upon

death or as a casting of the reunited body and soul into Gehenna after the resurrection and the last judgment.”³

Although many do not like to think about eternal suffering, as we have read about a few here, it still exists, and we must live with it. We still do not have much information as to the punishment and types, but just the separation from God, and being in the same environment with demons and other nasty life forms, not seeing well in the darkness, hearing constant moaning and gnashing of teeth, sounds awful in itself.

One issue that may arise when discussing Hell and Gehenna is how Hell is different from purgatory. Aren't both a staging area to hold souls until the new heaven and earth come? Perhaps as people read Matthew 4:16, they conclude that some people have sat in the darkness, not to be confused with outer darkness, and have repented. Matthew 4:16: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death. Light has dawned.”

Potential Purification Compared with Other Hell Theologies.

Potential Purification is a recent category of Hell theologies. Unlike Protestant tradition, it theorizes that some will be released from Hell after a finite debt is paid, though others will resist God forever. Unlike Catholic tradition, it theorizes that time in the flames of torment is not fixed at death, when one is either assigned to Hell or Purgatory, but is influenced by one's resistance to God while in Hell. Unlike Universalism and Annihilationism, it theorizes that at least some will burn forever, because they will resist forever.

There is much we will never be sure of about Hell, but we can take Jesus' words and know enough that it should be no place anyone should take lightly, going into death with an “I don't care attitude.” When we are told and warned of the treachery, we need to believe.

While many speculate about communication with others, of which we find nothing in Scripture, once a person is in Gehenna we are told of the **outer darkness** and the gnashing of teeth, ***Outer- the darkness outside the limits of the lighted palace (to which the Messiah's kingdom is here likened), Matthew 8:12; Matthew 22:13; Matthew 25:30. [(Sept.; Strabo, others).] exōteros***

Darkness - metaph. of ignorance respecting divine things and human duties, and the accompanying ungodliness and immorality, together with their consequent misery in hell. Again, here we find confusion between Hell and Gehenna.

When we study Gehenna, we find nothing about people communicating with one another as we do in Hades or Hell regarding Lazarus and the rich man. The meaning of outer darkness sheds light on the terrible separation from God.

³ The Anchor Bible Dictionary, Doubleday Publishing, 1540 Broadway, New York, New York, 10036, Volume 2, page II- 927,

Weeping - weeping, lamentation: Matthew 2:18; (Matthew 8:12); Matthew 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28; Acts 20:37.

Gnashing of teeth - a gnashing of teeth used to denote extreme anguish and utter despair of men consigned to eternal punishment in hell, snarling, growling: in the sense of biting.

There is nothing pleasant about these definitions. Agony is their place, constant pain and anguish, with no other sounds that are found to be present in Gehenna.

The confusion between Hell and Gehenna is going to go on until we all come to understand God's plan in its overall implications. Until such time as we have used Hell as the final holding place of evil far too often, we have learned that Hades and Hell will be cast into Gehenna, Revelation 20:14.

Visit these sites to learn and grow more.

[Inerrancy – Defending the doctrine of inerrancy. What some interpret as contradictions in the Scripture.](#)

[Probe.org – dig deeper](#)

[The Bible says](#)

[Answer the Bible](#)

[Got Questions.org -](#)

When will we receive our resurrected bodies?

Answer

The concept of a future bodily resurrection is found throughout Scripture ([Job 19:25–27](#); [Isaiah 26:19](#); [Daniel 12:2](#); [Matthew 22:23–33](#); [John 11:24–25](#); [Revelation 20:4–6, 11–14](#)). The Bible reveals two categories of resurrection: the [first resurrection](#) (of the saved) and the second resurrection (of the unsaved). The first resurrection includes the redeemed of every age. The timing of the first resurrection is conditional and does not occur at the same time as the second resurrection. Each resurrection will occur according to a specific order. God has appointed a future time to raise all the dead.

Jesus declared the truth of the resurrection in opposition to the [Sadducees'](#) denial of it ([Matthew 22:23–33](#)). He referenced [Exodus 3:6](#) as proof. On another occasion, Jesus declared the certainty of resurrection: "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the

good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment” ([John 5:28–29, NASB 1995](#)).

The first resurrection includes “Christ, the firstfruits,” that is, the first one to be resurrected from the dead ([1 Corinthians 15:23a](#)), with many more to follow ([Romans 6:9](#); [Colossians 1:18](#); [Revelation 1:18](#)). “Those who are Christ’s [are resurrected] at His coming” ([1 Corinthians 15:23b, NASB](#)). The resurrection of church age saints (living and dead) will occur at the rapture ([1 Thessalonians 4:16](#)). The resurrection of Old Testament believers (Jew and Gentile) will occur at the second coming ([Daniel 12:2](#); [Isaiah 26:19](#)). The resurrection of all martyred tribulation saints will also be at the second coming ([Revelation 20:4](#)). The resurrection of every [millennial](#) believer will not be “until the thousand years were completed” (verse 5, NASB).

The intermediate state is the time between one’s death and receiving one’s resurrected body. While it is a state without a body ([2 Corinthians 5:3–8](#)), it is a time of conscious joy with the Lord (verses 8–9). Scripture reveals that the soul is conscious when the body dies. Though disembodied, it has not entered its complete and final condition. The body and soul must be united again in order that the entire person may inherit the imperishable. The intermediate state for the believer is described as a condition of bliss, in contrast to the torment experienced by the unbeliever. The state of the faithful after death is described as a condition of rest.

The believer has two prospects of hope awaiting him or her: 1) the resurrection of the body should death occur, or 2) translation from corruption to incorruption if alive at the coming of the Lord. Paul said he was reluctant to die and thus be temporarily disembodied (“found naked,” “unclothed,” “absent from the body,” [2 Corinthians 5:3–4, 8, NASB](#)). His hope was to receive a new, glorified body without having to experience death—the hope of all believers who survive to the coming of the Lord for His church. At the rapture, the living will receive glorified bodies through translation (transformation) and the deceased through resurrection.

There are multiple times of resurrection that comprise the first resurrection of [Revelation 20:1–6](#). All of these are associated with the second coming of Christ. After that, verses 11–15 refer to a second resurrection—the resurrection of the unjust. The first resurrection involves multiple events. The word *first* does not imply only one resurrection, but refers to a certain kind of resurrection (i.e., the one that is “blessed and holy,” verse 6).

The resurrection of the unjust will occur at the end of Christ’s millennial reign ([Revelation 20:11–14](#)). That resurrection will include all the unjust from all ages, together with those who die during the [tribulation](#) and the millennium. God will judge all unredeemed humanity, in addition to Satan and the fallen angels. The result is that

those whose names are not found written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire ([Revelation 20:11–15](#)).