

HELL

August 31, 2025, Pastor Jerry

What comes to mind when you first think about Hell? Does it trouble you? Is it a waste of time to even spend a second thinking about it? Do you feel you have a good enough knowledge of Hell? Have you ever pictured Hell in your mind, pondering what the eternal torment might be? As you study this topic, you will not find Hell used but once in some translations; instead, it is referred to as Sheol, **שְׁאוֹל** she'ôwl, sheh-ole'; or **הַאֲדָמָה** shē'ôl; from H7592; hades or the world of the dead (as if a subterranean retreat), including its accessories and inmates:—grave, hell, pit. Keep this in mind as you study, for it is not the final judgment; it is not the Lake of Fire.¹ **Revelation 20:14: Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.** [fn]

Let's take a look at people who think of what Hell may be like and the questions they have. I have posted the various article titles and links to them, so you may find them interesting and helpful. Is it as bad as we often picture it? Is it any place that anyone should desire? Are people like Esau, when they laugh it off, not taking the importance of Scripture and faith seriously? Others' comments are in parentheses, mine are open.

The Gospel Coalition, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/hell-as-endless-punishment/>

The also have a study on the degrees of punishment in Hell.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/degrees-punishment-hell/>

“Jesus himself speaks more about hell than any other figure in scripture. Jesus’s teaching relies on Old Testament depictions of final judgment (Isa. 66:22–24; Jer. 7:32–8:3). The Bible describes hell as a place of eternal conscious torment.”

Conscious torment. This is a crucial fact that many people do not believe in. Why do I say it is factual? Is it Biblical? If we read Luke 16:23-25, we discover an extremely important portion of Scripture, the Holy Spirit points out that people earn damnation when they deny God. It may not be an intentional denial, as many do not believe, but rather, it is often due to a lack of understanding and trust in Scripture. However, according to Romans chapter one, they are without excuse. See Romans 1:20

KJV, 16:22-25: And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23: And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24: And 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. 25: But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

It's important to realize that, unlike the other verses leading up to this account, which are parables, this is not. It is a warning that eternal punishment is something for those who are judged and sentenced, having earned for themselves eternal damnation. **“God does not want any to perish, but that all would come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9)**. We fail when we think evil is doing awful things; it is not evil on its own. It is the evil inside of us; the verse in Galatians addresses the simplicity of ignoring God’s calling.

NKJV. Galatians 6:8: Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit.

These can be good people, individuals who care for others, are very charitable, and live decent lives. However, they live without God, doing for themselves what they believe is righteous and enjoying the praise that belongs to our Lord. **James 3:17: NLT. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.**

Many people will never discover the joy in living out the above verse; it does not imply they are full of evil deeds. Evil is in the rejection of God; they live according to their own idea of righteousness.

Challies <https://www.challies.com/articles/the-unbearable-weight-of-hell/>

“Randy Alcorn’s book Heaven has over 300,000 copies in print and there are another 200,000 Heaven-related products in print with it. I’m quite sure that he would have sold fewer than 3,000 had the book been titled Hell.”

The author of the article makes one comment with which I disagree, specifically that God will be present in Hell. He says this for the reason that God’s wrath will exist for eternity. I have always understood that the worst part of Hell is the separation from God. I would question whether God has to be present to exercise His wrath, but the article raises good questions that many of us will also ponder. It is a very short read, and He inserts comments from Jonathan Edwards, which I find very pointed and meaningful.

Is God Present or Absent in Hell?

“Now, David and Josiah in their questions both asked, more or less, about the presence of God in hell. And they point to two very relevant texts. [Revelation 14:10](#), which gives the impression that the Lamb of God may be present in hell, says that those who worship the beast “will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.” And the other text is [2 Thessalonians 1:9](#): “They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.”

So, first, a word about [Revelation 14:10](#). When it refers to the torments of hell in the presence of the Lamb, the term “in the presence of” means “in the sight of,” not “in the same space as.” The Greek word used literally is “before the Lamb”; they will be tormented “before the Lamb.” The

same word is used in [Revelation 3:2](#) like this: “I have not found your works complete *in the sight of my God.*” That’s the same exact construction: “in the sight of my God,” “in the presence of my God.” He can see. It’s before him in that sense.

So when we say that something happens “in the sight of God” or “in the sight of the Lamb,” we don’t necessarily mean that God or the Lamb is in the same space of what they are seeing. So, I think [Revelation 14:10](#) does not say that God or Jesus or the Lamb has some kind of ongoing residence in hell. But they can and do see hell.

Now, when [2 Thessalonians 1:9](#) says that the punishments of hell will be “away from the presence of the Lord,” the word for *presence* there is *face*, “away from the *face* of the Lord.” In other words, hell is a fulfillment of the threat in [Ezekiel 7:22](#), for example, where God says, “I will turn my face from them.” It’s the exact opposite of the blessing in [Numbers 6:24–26](#):

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

“There is in hell an everlasting frown of disapproving justice.” [Desiring God](#)

That’s the exact opposite of what happens in hell. That does not happen in hell. The gracious countenance of God does not shine upon them. And there is in hell an everlasting frown of disapproving justice.”

The idea of looking into Hell is not to scare people into turning to God; although it demonstrates good reason, it is not a good enough reason. We should desire to go to Heaven because of all that the Trinity has accomplished in loving and caring for us. It is more about our relationship with the Godhead and bringing glory to our Lord. It is a relationship so full of love that in our present state, we cannot begin to comprehend the why, at least until we are in the presence of our Mighty God.

When the thief on the cross next to Jesus appeared not to be worried as much about where he was going, but rather more concerned about Jesus and His innocence, he demonstrated sincerity in the life of our Lord.

Luke 23:41: We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

There are two other verses that need to be understood here, **23:40: But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence?** Is it not then reasonable to wonder which is the focus of concern? Unlike us, Jesus knows the heart, and when the thief asked Jesus to think of him when He comes into His kingdom, it was surely a sincere question. Why did he not ask Jesus to get him off the cross or speak some words that would set him free? His focus was on his own sin and the righteous life of the Messiah, who did not deserve to be there.

What will Hell be like?

I have never been fascinated with the topic of Hell, and I have spent little time thinking about it. I believe that for the sincere believer, there is a deeper desire to get our own lives right so that we may spend eternity in the presence of our Mighty God. To glorify the Father is far more important than worrying about Hell. Most of the humble are happy to be so recognized as such, in the nature of our Lord Jesus, and humbly come wanting to be in His presence.

Beyond the gates of Hell

We have been looking into the how's and whys of not going or believing in Hell. We read earlier that Hell and Hades were cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14). So, here we find that while Hell is a very dry, uncomfortable, and hot place to be, it is not the place of eternal punishment as described in other verses.

For me, one of the most disgusting pictures we are given is in **Isaiah 66:24 (KJV) — And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.** This, for me, is a picture of continual rotting flesh, and the one being punished is conscience to the constant eating of this worm. I hope that for those who laugh at the idea of Heaven, they read this verse and understand the punishment that will be ongoing without end, and they carry with them a pair of nose plugs.

I don't think there is anything more disgusting than this picture, to walk amongst corpses rotting, and having your own be such should shake up anyone who is on the fence. It is my understanding that because of the evil these have committed, all of this will never cease. Certain churches that call themselves Christian will not accept Hell for the reason that God's compassion is greater than this. Would God be fair if His punishment were favourable to one and not all? Would God be just in forgiving sin when He has so diligently spelled out the waiting punishment for sinners? Do these people believe their understanding stands in contrast to the Scripture? Will one's denial save them from Hell?

We hear of the gnashing of teeth. Here are the seven verses from the NKJV addressing this issue,

Mat 8:12: But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. So here we find darkness, weeping, and gnashing of teeth.

Mat 13:42: They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Here we see the blazing furnace added.

Mat 13:50: and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. It is reiterated.

Mat 22:13: "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The darkness here implies, “ignorance respecting divine things and human duties, and the accompanying ungodliness and immorality, together with their consequent misery in hell.”

Mat 24:51: He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Hypocrite, a dissembler, pretender, hypocrite: Still another group.

Mat 25:30: And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Luke 13:28: “There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out.

We will pick up here next week, taking a bit closer at the theology behind certain books and verses. What do those who go through the tribulation witness? And what is coming halfway through the tribulation, and then we look into Hell, and when we go from Hell to Genena, the Lake of Fire.

ⁱ What do the footnotes in the NKJV [New King James Version] mean?

December 18, 2023 at 5:18 AM

These notations are meant to identify the original manuscript source of Bible passages. Here are more details from the New King James Version preface:<https://support.biblegateway.com/hc/en-us/articles/360001399228-What-do-the-footnotes-in-the-NKJV-New-King-James-Version-mean>

Where significant variations occur in the New Testament Greek manuscripts, textual notes are classified as follows:

NU-Text

These variations from the traditional text generally represent the Alexandrian or Egyptian type of text [the oldest, but sometimes questioned text]. They are found in the Critical Text published in the Twenty-sixth edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (N) and in the United Bible Society's third edition (U), hence the acronym "NU-text."

M-Text

This symbol indicates points of variation in the Majority Text from the traditional text [a consensus of most Greek manuscripts]. It should be noted that M stands for whatever reading is printed in the published Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text, whether supported by overwhelming, strong, or only a divided majority textual tradition.