

PREACHING ON HELL

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INTRODUCTION

The truth about hell is being obscured by many false prophets today. To many, hell is a “figment of the Jewish imagination,” a “baseless fear unbecoming to the love of God.” Even religious people have treated hell as a joke, something to be laughed at, mocked, ridiculed, or ignored. Hell is no joke and “**fools make a mock at sin,**” (Pro. 14:9, *KJV*). Satan rejoices when hell becomes little more than a curse word in our vocabulary.

Once upon a time, men revered the Bible and shuddered when it was read. They stood in awe of hell and desired to go to heaven. They knew when they stood in danger of the hell of fire and had a healthy respect for its awesomeness. Today it is different. Even in our own congregations you hear little preaching on “Hell and Who Is Going There” or “The Dangers of Hell” or “God’s Punishment for the Wicked.” It is “love, sweet love” until people suffer from synthetic diabetes, due to too much sugar in their diet! Let us restore the Bible teaching on hell and walk in the reverence and awe of its truth. Let us consider “The Truth About Hell.”

THE BIBLE’S TEACHING ABOUT THE PLACE OF HELL

Hell is real. Just as surely as there is a heaven there is a hell. Notice, “**And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life**” (Mat. 25:46, *ASV*). Anyone who wishes to believe in the eternality of heaven is faced with the reality of hell. God saw fit to use the same word *eternal* to describe the bliss of heaven and the punishment of hell.

Do you believe in an everlasting God? Then notice Romans 16:26: “**but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all nations unto obedience of faith.**” Once again, the word *eternal* is used. It is a form of the same Greek word. Just as surely as God is everlasting, so hell is eternal.

Do you believe in the “eternal spirit”? Notice Hebrews 9:14: “**how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**” Here is our word again. Just as surely as the Holy Spirit is eternal, just so hell is eternal. All of these are from the Greek word *aionios* which means everlasting, eternal, without end, or never to cease.

Since hell is a reality, where is it? Is it up or down, here or there? Most of us are aware that the English word *hell* in our translations of the Bible are used for the original words *Sheol*; *Hades*; *Gehenna*. The previous two words refer to realms of the spirit of the dead, while *Gehenna* is the final punishment of the wicked, or the eternal abode of the damned. It is associated with fire as the source of torment. Both body and soul are cast into it, “**And be not afraid of them that 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,**” (Mat. 10:28). This, of course, presuppose the resurrection. Its actual location is not dwelt on in the New Testament.

Jesus makes it abundantly clear it is a place to be avoided at all costs.

And if thy hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having thy two hands to go into hell into the unquenchable fire. And if thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life halt, rather than having thy two feet to be cast into hell. And, if thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out: it is good for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye,

rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell; where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire (Mark 9:43-49).

Neighbor, we had best beware; hell exists, it is personal, horrible, and eternal!

THE BIBLE'S TEACHING ABOUT THE PERSONS OF HELL

The great class of those who never knew our Lord nor obeyed His gospel.

And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might (2 The. 1:7-9).

This passage alone should put the marching shoes on every Christian to reach the lost. There will be more Christians in hell for not preaching the gospel than for committing adultery!

Hell shall contain the immoral. Notice Revelation 22:15, **"Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and everyone that loveth and maketh a lie."** Our ungodly, immoral, permissive society shall blast their way into eternal punishment because of their lascivious, sensual perversions. Our nation and world reeks of moral filth. Our cities are cesspools of filth and sewers of iniquity. Such are filthy and unrighteous:

He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still (Rev. 22:11).

Such are hardened of heart and shall pay a terrible price:

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his works: to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life: but unto them that are factious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation (Rom. 2:5-8).

Hypocrites fill the false religions of our lands and they too shall not escape.

Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Mat. 7:21-23).

Such hypocrisy brought forth Jesus' scathing denunciation.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full from extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside thereof may become clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity (Mat. 23:25-28).

The Christian who turns back shall be the worst of all.

For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them. It has happened unto them according to the

true proverb, the dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

What a price to pay for a few months of sin. Willful sin is horrible to behold.

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of Judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries. A man that hath set at nought Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall be judged 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? For we know him that said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:26-31).

To flirt with sin is to tread on dangerously thin ice; it can lead to eternal ill penitence.

For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame (Heb. 6:4-6).

And finally, a class of young people caught in their sins praying for crop failure as they sow their wild oats:

But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap (Gal. 6:6-7).

Also notice Ecclesiastes 12:1-2:

Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain.

Let us warn our young people in no uncertain words: **"...the wages of sin is death..."** (Rom. 6:23).

Is it any wonder hell is prepared for the devil and his angels? **"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels"** (Mat. 25:41).

THE BIBLE'S TEACHING ABOUT THE PUNISHMENT OF HELL

We noticed hell is a prepared place (for the devil and his angels). Every instance of its mention in scripture bespeaks of its punishment. There is no joy there.

The punishment is so great men are pictured as being in excruciating pain and torment.

And he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast forth without (Luke 13:27-28).

Men gnash their teeth in time of great pain. The worm dies not and the fire is unending. Notice Mark 9:48, **"where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."**

There is darkness and blackness of an eternal night **"wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved for ever"** (Jude 13).

All there are outcasts from the presence of God:

And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might (2 The. 1:7-9).

This surely is one of the greatest punishments of hell, being denied fellowship with God and His Saints throughout all eternity.

And finally, it is a lake of fire and brimstone. **“And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire,”** (Rev. 20:15). Surely we can only see bleak despair and unbearable eternal punishment in all of this.

THE BIBLE’S TEACHING ABOUT THE PAIN OF HELL

The inhabitants cry for mercy, **“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 in anguish in this flame,”** (Luke 16:24). If the punishment of the hades world calls forth such cries, how much sorer punishment shall Gehenna bring forth!

There is no rest, **“and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night...”** (Rev. 14:11).

The wicked shall be tormented by evil memories.

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted and thou art in anguish (Luke 16:25).

Only anguish is there:

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev. 20:10).

There is outer darkness, **“but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth”** (Mat. 8:12).

Bitter weeping, but tears too late (Mat. 8:12).

THE BIBLE’S TEACHING ABOUT THE PERMANENCY OF HELL

Its punishment is everlasting, **“who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might”** (2 The. 1:9).

Smoke of torment goes up forever. **“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever”** (Rev. 20:10). No mediation here!

Both by day and night.

And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, that hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice. If any man worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and 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 goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name (Rev. 14:8-11).

There is only night there and only light in heaven. Therefore, hell is as long as heaven, “**And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life,**” (Mat. 25:46).

CONCLUSION

God sends no man to hell. Man, by his own stubborn rebellion sends himself to outer darkness and eternal punishment. God wants every man to be saved. But God’s justice demands the wicked be punished just as God demands the righteous be blessed. Aren’t you afraid of hell; then let us forsake every way that leads there. Let us cleave to the good and love the truth. Let us remember then, God’s teaching on hell. Amen.~

Deceased