

THE BEREANS

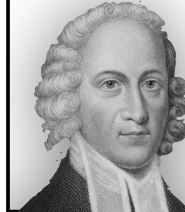
ACTS 17:11

Revelation 20:11-15
Lesson #34
Hell
08/28/2022

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.**”

Jonathan Edwards



“God is as angry with *sinner*s as He is with those miserable creatures He is *now* tormenting in hell, and who - at this very moment - do feel and bear the fierceness of His wrath.”

What does the Scripture really say about the final judgment and HELL?

Are all of these popular views of hell true?

- Hellfire is real and **exists now.**
- At death, we go either to **glory or the lake of fire.**
- Hell is **endless, conscious, punishment in body and soul by fire** for all who do not know Christ.
- Hell is not popular but it is **clearly explained** in the Bible.
- Hell **glorifies** a holy loving God.
- Hell will always **coexist** with heaven.



Consideration #1

The final judgment in Scripture is often linked to works not faith.

2 Corinthians 5:10

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, **according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**”

Romans 2:6

“(God) *will render to every man according to his deeds.*”

Revelation 20 The Final Judgement

“¹¹ And I saw a **great white throne**, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and **the books** were opened: and another book was opened, which is the **book of life**: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead, which were in it; and death and Hades delivered up the dead, which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. ¹⁴ **And death and hell (Hades) were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.** ¹⁵ **And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.**”

Consideration #2

Hell, as commonly understood, does not yet exist.



Sheol / Hades is the general abode of the souls of the dead. It is an obscure, shadowy place of futility. In the N.T. it includes Paradise.



Gehenna is the place of future eternal punishment of the wicked, the lake of fire (a burial pit outside Jerusalem).

Hades (soul)

Paradise

Torment

Human death before Christ's Resurrection

Luke 16:19-31

"22... the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to **Abraham's bosom**; and the rich man also died and was buried. 23 And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in **torment**,"

The Grave (body)

6

Hades (soul)

Paradise

Torment

The Intermediate state

Final Judgment

Judgment awaits the resurrection of the body at the end of time.

Revelation 20:13

"and **death and Hades** delivered up the dead, which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

The Grave (body)

7

Hades (soul)

Torment

The Grave (body)

Great White Throne

"The books (personal moral record)"

Lake of Fire

The path of the **unbeliever** at the end of days when Christ returns

8

Hades (soul)

Paradise

The Grave (body)

The Bema (Judgment Seat of Christ)

"The Book of Life" (Christ's righteousness)

New Heaven and earth

The path of the **believer** at the end of days when Christ returns

9

God loves us because God is love. God offers us everlasting life by grace, through no merit on our part,

unless we don't respond in the right way, then God will torture us forever, in hell.

Does this make sense?

10


Can we realistically ask and expect modern people to love, worship, and follow that kind of God?

It's not the idea of punishment that's in question

but the issue of proportional, perpetual, punishment for the glory of a God of LOVE.

11

“There is no doctrine which I would more willingly remove from Christianity than **(hell)**, if it lay in my power, but it has the full support of scripture and specially of our Lord’s own words.”



C.S. Lewis

12

Consideration #3

Christians have held differing views of the Biblical doctrine of HELL.

<p>Metaphor - fire and brimstone are metaphors of total isolation from God (peace, justice, grace, love, etc.)</p>	<p>Annihilationism - Conditional Immortality - only believers are granted immortality (eternal life). The unbeliever is eventually annihilated after a period of torment. Clark Pinnock, John Stott, Philip Hughes, & C.S. Lewis.</p>
---	--

13

John Stott “I find the concept **(the popular view of hell)** intolerable and do not understand how people can live with it without either cauterizing their feelings or cracking under the strain.”
Essentials p.314

Clark Pinnock “I conclude that the traditional belief that God makes the wicked suffer in an unending conscious torment in hell is unbiblical, is fostered by a hellenistic view of human nature, is detrimental to the character of God, and is being rejected by a growing number of biblically faithful, contemporary scholars.”
Four Views of Hell p.165

14

Consideration #4

The true literary sense of a text is sometimes metaphor.

1. **Jesus’ teaching is rich with metaphor** - “if your eye offend you, cut it out”, etc.
2. **Teaching on “last things” (heaven, hell, etc) is rich in metaphor** - towered cities, streets of gold, etc.
3. **Literal meanings create nonsense** - fire / outer darkness, gnashing teeth.
4. **Eternal (aion)** - can have the meaning of “extended but not necessarily unending time.”

15

Consideration #5

The Bible often uses annihilation terminology for hell.

- Is hell a part of the ultimate end of **God’s perfect plan** at the end of time?
- The N.T. indicates that only God is immortal (1 Tim.2:12-16) and those who are raised in Christ (1 Cor.15:51-55).
- If **only God is immortal**, what does this suggest about those who are outside the Body of Christ?
- Is the idea of universal human immortality a **Greek philosophical idea** adopted by the early church?

16

1 Corinthians 15:53
“For this perishable must put on the **imperishable**, and this mortal must put on **immortality**.”

1 Timothy 6:16
“(Lord of lords) **who alone possesses immortality** and dwells in unapproachable light.”

Romans 2:7
“to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and **immortality**, eternal life.”

17

Psalm 37:38

“Transgressors will be altogether **destroyed**.”

Matthew 10:28

“fear Him who is able to **destroy** both soul and body in hell.”

2 Thessalonians 1:9

“the penalty of **eternal destruction**, away from the presence of the Lord”

Matthew 3:12

“**burning up** the chaff with unquenchable fire”

John 3:16

“whoever believes in him shall not **perish**, but have eternal life.”

18

Consideration #6

Eternity is best understood as a timeless state of being.

2 Corinthians 4:18

“while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are **temporal** but the things which are not seen are **eternal**.”

- The eternal are **contrasted** with the temporal (limited by time).
- The eternal can be understood not as never ending time (an endless series of years) but as **timeless**.

19

Psalm 78:69

“the earth which is founded **forever**”

2 Peter 3:10

“the earth and its works **will be burned up**”

Romans 16:25

“according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long **ages (eternity)** past,”

20

- The Law of Moses was to be an “**everlasting covenant**” (Lev.24:8 yet we read in the New Covenant the first was “**done away**” and “**abolished**” (2 Cor.3:11,13), and God “**made the first old**” (Heb.8:13).
- Sodom’s fiery judgment is “**eternal**” (Jude 7) until God “**will restore the fortunes of Sodom**” (Ezek.16:53-55).
- Eternal punishment is not rehabilitation but punishment - possibly **capital punishment**?

21

“I notice that Our Lord, while stressing the terror of Hell with unsparing severity, usually emphasizes the idea not of duration but of finality.”

C.S. Lewis

22

HELL - some tentative conclusions

- **Hell is real** - Hell is a necessary corollary to God’s holiness, and human free choice.
- **Limited insight** - The details about Hell are not as clear as we might like. *1 Cor.13:12*
- **Literary meaning** - The Biblical vocabulary of heaven and hell are often metaphoric.
- **Separation from God** - Hell is not a place that anyone will want to go although many will choose it.
- **Eternality** - Hell is not defined by time so much as experience.

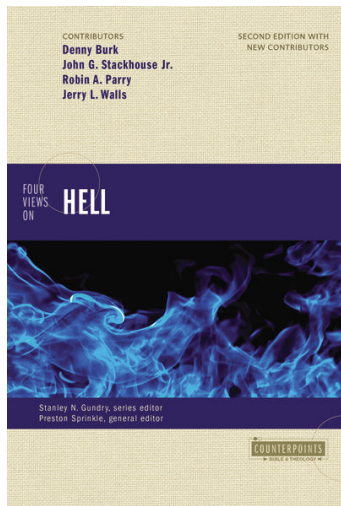
23

So what do I think hell will be like?

THE absence of God and His glory!

- **The torment of isolation** - It will be an existence where those who are formed in the image of God will find themselves completely displaced, alone, and without a point of meaningful reference.
- **The terror of hopelessness** - It will be a place of ultimate despair where there is no possibility of relief, or rescue.
- **The trauma of ultimate discomfort** - It will be an experience where body and soul are trapped in a context of unimagined, inexplicable trauma.
- **The termination of life** - I will not be surprised to learn that it might end in annihilation as the "second death."

24



Four Views on HELL Zondervan Stanley N. Gundry (series editor) Counterpoints

CONTRIBUTORS
Denny Burk
John G. Stackhouse Jr.
Robin A. Parry
Jerry L. Walls

26

Counterpoints Library - 32 Volume Set

- *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today?*
- *Do Christians, Muslims, and Jews Worship the Same God?: Four Views*
- *Evaluating the Church Growth Movement*
- *Exploring the Worship Spectrum*
- *Five Views on Apologetics*
- *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*
- *Five Views on Law and Gospel*
- *Five Views on Sanctification*
- *Five Views on the Church and Politics*
- *Five Views on the Extent of the Atonement*
- *Four Views on Christian Spirituality*
- *Four Views on Christianity and Philosophy*
- *Four Views on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*
- *Four Views on Divine Providence*
- *Four Views on Eternal Security*
- *Four Views on Hell*
- *Four Views on Moving beyond the Bible to Theology*
- *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*
- *Four Views on the Apostle Paul*
- *Four Views on the Book of Revelation*
- *Four Views on the Church's Mission*
- *Four Views on the Historical Adam*
- *Four Views on the Role of Works at the Final Judgment*
- *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism*
- *Genesis: History, Fiction, or Neither?: Three Views on the Bible's Earliest Chapters*
- *How Jewish Is Christianity?: Two Views on the Messianic Movement*
- *Remarriage after Divorce in Today's Church*
- *Show Them No Mercy: Four Views on God and the Canaanite Genocide*
- *Three Views on Eastern Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism*
- *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*
- *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*
- *Three Views on the Rapture*
- *Two Views on Homosexuality, the Bible, and the Church*
- *Two Views on the Doctrine of the Trinity*
- *Two Views on Women in Ministry*
- *Understanding Four Views on Baptism*
- *Understanding Four Views on the Lord's Supper*
- *Who Runs the Church?: Four Views on Church Government*