

What the Bible Says About Hell

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[0:00] Third, many Bible scholars, sadly to say, many Bible scholars do not believe in hell anymore.

! Theological liberalism, where many, many scholars in some of the great schools in America came to the conclusion that much of the Bible is not to be taken literally and certainly the teaching about hell.

And so Bible scholars, and still today, are just really explaining it all away in some theological terms. And so, third, or fourth, most scientists, and you don't really need, these are just kind of some givens, you certainly know this to be true, that most scientists say that a literal place, now that's key, because I'm going to tell you here in a moment that hell is a real place.

But most scientists say that a literal place called hell could not exist. It's just not possible. Alright? But, number five, the real question is, what does God say?

[1:35] That's the real question. I mean, that's the most important question to answer. And it's an easy one to answer, because we just look to the Bible. And when you do that, then sixth, the Bible speaks of hell as a real place.

A real place. And so that kind of gets me to the, I guess, the original question. Since the Bible does speak on hell, and there are many, many references to hell, some of them quite graphic, some of them, you know, very picturesque in a kind of negative sort of way.

Since the Bible has references there to hell, are we then to take that, take those references literally? Or, is it figurative language?

Now, I'll answer that one real quick. You may think this is dodging, the answer, but here's the best way to answer it. I'm going to preach it exactly the way the Bible teaches.

Or has. And I don't know any other way. Now, obviously, we can look, and maybe tonight, along the way, as we look at some of these passages, we might be able to say that maybe some of this is figurative in the sense that the Bible writers, as they were inspired by God, had to use the English language.

[3:12] Or not English, had to use human languages. And they just simply described it in the best way they could with the language they had.

We could say that about some of the descriptions of heaven. It's not that we're to take it just strictly as symbolic or figurative.

I think the Bible writers were intended to be very literal. And the descriptions about hell were intended to be very literal. Like the fire that is never quenched.

Or like the darkness. The worm that never dies. The fire and brimstone. All of those phrases. I think that we can take those literally.

Now, just what exactly the fire and brimstone consists of in hell. Just exactly what that darkness might be, literally, we don't know.

[4:16] The substance of some of these things, we cannot know. But it is a place where all those things exist. And we're going to get to those as we go along. And so I'm just going to preach it the way God wrote it.

And to take it very literal. So that kind of answers that question. So what we're going to have to do is look at the facts concerning hell.

And the scholars and some preachers and maybe even some church members even might reason their way into hell.

But once they get there, they can't reason their way out. And so, you know, to try to rationalize and reason your way out of a literal place called hell just won't work.

And there are people who scoff at the idea of hell. And you can laugh at hell. A person can laugh their way into hell. But they will not laugh their way out of hell once they get there.

[5:22] And so we're just going to have to find out what the facts are. So let's do that. What the Bible says about the place called hell. Number one, hell will be a place full of wicked beings.

Wicked beings. Beings of at least a couple of types. Both spiritual as well as human. And so let me just list three of them here.

In fact, I put a quote in here from Mark Twain. And listen to what he said. He said, I'll take heaven for climate and hell for society. That's what Mark Twain said.

Isn't that crazy? I wonder if he still feels the same way. I don't know about Mark Twain. I can't judge whether or not he ever became a Christian, but he didn't profess to be one.

And so anyway, whichever place he is, he knows the truth now about it. But, well, who will be in hell? Number one, the devil will be there.

[6:30] And that's important, I think, to acknowledge because there are varying views about that. Revelation 20.10, though, says that the devil who deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

So, the devil is going to be there. That's who will be in hell. And so, you know, Mark Twain or Samuel Clemens, you know, that's the kind of society who's going to be in hell that at least at one point you said you would love to have hell for that society.

The devil is going to be there. And by the way, the devil will not be in charge of things in hell. You know, we have bought into this kind of fanciful, I don't know if fanciful is the right word, but this delusion that the devil is the Lord of hell.

That he, you know, he's down there right now, you know, ruling in hell. He's, you know, he's got the red suit on and, you know, the tail with a little point on it.

And he's got a pitchfork and he's making people shovel coal for eternity. And all these kind of weird kinds of ideas. The devil is not the ruler of hell.

[7:54] Revelation 20.10, I just read it a moment ago. Let me remind you, it says, And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Who's they? The devil and the beast and the false prophet, at least in the context of this text. All right? So the devil will be there. That's the kind of society that will be there.

And then second, fallen angels will be there. Or, let's use the word demons. Demons will be in hell. 2 Peter 2.4 Now, according to Revelation 12.4, A third of the angels sinned with Satan and fell from heaven.

A third of them. I don't know how many that is. But that's a whole bunch. A whole bunch of them. And they fell. A third of them. So can you imagine being in hell?

I hope you can't. But you imagine a place like hell, like being there with that many demons there. Hell, by the way, Matthew 25.41 says, was prepared for the devil and his demons, his angels.

[9:24] All right? So there you have it. The devil will be there. The fallen angels will be there. And then there's one other group of people. Ungodly humans will be there. Ungodly humans.

Revelation 21.8 But the cowardly or fearful, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

All right? All those people are going to be there. And more. This is not an exhausted list here. Well, and of course, someone will object and say, well, but I'm not a murderer. Or I'm not sexually immoral.

Or I'm not a sorcerer. But what about the sin of unbelief? By the way, unbelief is second on the list. And fearful is first. And the idea behind that word fearful or cowardly, depending on your translation, is the same as unbelief.

[10:33] It's those who have a profession, but it's not real. And the minute they face temptation or bump in the road or persecution, they're out of there.

They're fearful. They're not true believers. And so really, then you could say that unbelief leads the list here in Revelation 21.8.

And so all unbeliever or ungodly humans will be there. And, you know, that's a pretty frightening thing when you think about it.

That every unbeliever will be joined in hell by every vile person who's ever lived.

Every murderer. From one-time murderers to mass murderers if they were not saved. Every sexual pervert that has ever lived.

[11 : 33] Every rapist. Well, I guess we just could go on with the list. Maybe in our minds we might just think about the worst of the worst kind of vile sinner.

And all those people are going to be in hell. Be populated by people like that. And so, then hell will be a place of wicked beings.

Number two, hell will be a place of separation from God's people. Hell will be a place of separation from God's people.

Well, Luke 13.28. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God. And then this phrase.

And yourselves thrust out. Thrust out. Now, not only is hell going to be a place where all the vile, wicked are.

[12 : 37] But in hell, the unbeliever will be eternally, eternally, forever separated from all godly, good, righteous people who have ever lived.

Can you imagine a place like that? See, we can't imagine a place like that. Even in the most wicked of places on this planet, there's still some good people and godly people we might know.

But in hell, forever, eternally separated from all good and godly and righteous people. Thirdly, hell will be a place of eternal death.

Eternal death. You know, death in the Bible does not mark the end. Death in the Bible does not mean annihilation, does it?

Genesis 2.16, for example. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat.

[13 : 50] For in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. That's what God said to Adam and Eve. Did they eat of the tree? They did, didn't they?

And the day that Adam and Eve ate of that tree and disobeyed God's one command they gave them. The day they ate of it, they died.

They did. They died. But not physically, did they? They died spiritually. And so, that leads us to the second point under number three.

Death in the Bible means separation from God. So, death is not annihilation. Death does not mark the end of it. Not for the believer.

Not even for the unbeliever. Those who have that or hold to that theology, some that we might even call some conservative theologians, believe that hell is annihilation.

[14 : 54] But it's not. Because death is not annihilation. Death is separation from God. Because the day Adam and Eve ate of that tree, Adam and Eve became minus God. That's what happened there.

Their death, or spiritual death, meant separation from God. 2 Thessalonians 1, verse 7. Listen to it. And to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven and 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.

Now, I think the most frightening word, and it's repeated twice in that text, is the word from. There's the idea. Separation.

[16 : 01] I mean, the horror of that. Think about it. The horror of it. Everlasting destruction separated from, forever separated from the presence of God.

I mean, just the idea, the image of destruction, destruction that never ends. See, I mean, an everlasting destruction.

It's almost impossible for our mind to even comprehend that possibility. An everlasting destruction. Because here, in this life, destruction happens and it's over, and, you know, if your house catches on fire and it's destroyed, then there's no house anymore.

But in hell, somehow, and I take it literally, though I don't understand it, somehow, the destruction goes on and on and on and on, and it's as horrifying as that is.

The most horrific part of that passage is this idea of being separated from, forever separated from, the very presence of God.

[17:12] And so, you know, no need to pray in hell. No need to repent. I mean, it won't do you any good.

You're forever separated from the presence of God. No need to pray. No need to repent. No need to seek and look for God and call out to God because He will not hear you. Now, you know, if you've ever experienced in this life, a season, for whatever reason, a season, a short time when you just felt like you prayed and God did not hear you and you were separated from Him and you, as a believer, know what that feels like.

Can you imagine something on the scale of hell where it is forever and ever and ever separated from Him? So death, or hell rather, will be a place of eternal death.

Number four, hell will be a place of eternal darkness. Eternal darkness. This is what the Bible says. In fact, in three particular passages, it uses imagery here that is difficult to understand.

And yet, you cannot read it without sensing the horror of it. For example, 2 Peter 2.4, God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness.

[18:48] Chains of darkness to be reserved for judgment. Chains of darkness. There is some question as to some translation issues there.

It could be literally dark dungeons. The word chains, there is some question as to the actual meaning of the Greek word there.

And so it could be dark dungeons, but that is just as bad. In fact, it maybe makes more sense to us to think of a dark dungeon.

But chains of darkness, just the image of that. Chains of darkness. Second, in Jude 13, as a matter of fact, let me throw in another verse you can write in because I didn't include it.

2 Peter 2.4, the parallel passage to that is Jude 6. Verse 6. And where Jude says, or describes as, everlasting chains under darkness.

[20:04] So still you have the idea of some dark, dark dungeon, some place like that. And it's horrifying.

The second one, in Jude 13, where Jude uses the term or the description blackness of darkness. Not that interesting.

Blackness of darkness. Some translations put it this way, the blackest darkness. Now, there's black and then there's black. There's dark, there's dark.

And some dark is darker than other dark. I mean, every one of us has probably been down inside a cave. And I have not been on any cave tour yet where they did not take us to a point and turn off all the lights and ask if you can see your hand in front of your face.

I mean, have you ever been in a cave where they didn't do that? Now, I will say the last time that we went through a cave, it didn't work because too many people have cell phones. So there's always some kind of light, you know, whether it's some light on the phone that's always shining or the minute they turn the lights out and got people opening their, you know, going to take a picture, I guess, or something of the darkness.

[21:22] I don't know what they're doing. But nevertheless, you know, if you have experienced that inside of a cave, maybe some of you have never been in a cave because you just don't want to be.

But if you've ever experienced that in that darkness that you don't normally experience, not even in the middle of the night in your home, you've got all the curtains closed, you know, there's still some light somewhere, you know.

But inside that cave it is dark and it's a heavy darkness. Ever since then, just a heavy kind of darkness. Darkness that you can almost feel, you know.

It's the blackness of darkness. darkness. And that does not even, what we could experience here does not come close to really describing what it will be like in hell as the Bible describes it.

Alright. Then, third, Matthew 8, 12, but the sons of the kingdom will be cast, by the way, that's not kingdom as in God's kingdom but the devil's kingdom, will be cast out into outer darkness.

[22:38] There's the other one. Outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Now, I do not propose to or claim to be able to describe this imagery to the fullest.

I mean, it's difficult. Especially when we go a little bit further here in the study and discover that hell is also a place of fire. And how there can be fire and darkness at the same time.

I don't know how to describe that. Scientists have discovered, they say, and I read this some, I don't know, several years ago, been able to develop a heap that has no light.

A kind of a nuclear type of thing. I don't know. I can't describe it. So, they do say that it's possible. But, anyway, here's darkness and the imagery of the blackness of darkness or dark dungeons or chains of darkness and outer darkness.

And, and, yeah, I think what we ought to, to, instead of trying to figure out exactly what those images mean to their fullest and what they'll be like, we ought to just simply imagine a place where the sun never, will never reach, never shine, ever.

[23 : 58] where, uh, the twinkle of the stars at night. You never see it in that. Uh, think of a place where the glow of the moon, you know, I like to see a, a full moon and it's, uh, you know, just beautiful in the sky in the evening and, uh, adds some beautiful light to a very dark night and yet the glow of the moon will never, ever reach, reach hell.

And, uh, to take that even further, just imagine that a place where there's no morning, no morning, no sunrise.

Uh, every one of us, whether it was when we were children or maybe even sometimes as adults, uh, have experienced the, kind of the, the fears or the, uh, the doldrums of night time sometimes, for whatever reason.

And, uh, uh, and it just seems to go on and yet the morning does come. And, and, and what a difference, uh, the sunrise makes on our attitude, our, our feelings, our outlook on things.

And, uh, what if it was night all the time? Well, in hell, it's night all the time. Just one long, eternal night.

[25 : 20] number five, hell will be a place of eternal burning. And, uh, there's no escaping it. The Bible speaks of it.

In Matthew 25, 41, it talks about everlasting fire. Then he will also say to those on the left hand, depart from me, this Matthew 25, 41, depart from me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

The fire, and then, secondly, Mark 9 speaks of the fire that shall never be quenched.

If your hand causes you to sin, he says there, Mark 9, 43, causes you to sin, cut it off, it's 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.

where their worm does not die. Just an image of just death, just constant death and decay and yet still persist.

[26 : 32] You know, the torment and torture persists. The fire is not quenched, he says. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It's better for you to enter life lame rather than having two feet to be cast into hell into the fire that shall never be quenched where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.

I don't know how you understand that, but I think we boil it down to this, be better, in fact, this is a quote from a preacher I heard several years ago. He said, be better to be a crippled saint than to be a healthy sinner.

Now, obviously, we don't take from this passage that God wants us to cut our feet off or our hands off, but we understand the message there, the seriousness of sin and the seriousness of hell.

Number six, hell will be a place of memory. A place of memory. And this is horrifying as well, if you think about it. Luke 16, verse 25, that Abraham said, Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted and you are tormented.

But the key word there is the word remember. Remember. Part of the hell of hell is that those who go there will remember the good things God gave them in this life.

[28 : 04] Remember those things. the air we breathe. All of the natural things that God has provided as part of His general grace for all of His creatures.

But I think it's permissible to take it a step further. They will also remember every gospel message they've heard. Can you imagine? especially those who have been privileged by God's providence to be saved born in a country like America where the gospel is being proclaimed I mean just 24-7.

Radio, TV, churches on nearly every corner, other services not just on Sunday, all the opportunities in the gospel that is going out.

There's no telling you take any given lost American who dies and goes to hell there's no telling how many times that person heard the good news of Jesus Christ and rejected His salvation.

And if the man or woman in hell is going to remember all the good things in their life they're going to remember that too. And hell is a place of memory.

[29:34] Number seven finally hell will be a place of despair and hopelessness. Despair and hopelessness.

Revelation 14.10 The smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever and they have no rest day or night. No rest day or night.

Translation no hope. No hope. No relief. No relief inside. No let up. No ebb and flow of the torment. You know even those in this life who say have a disease or have some ailment or some major pain physically.

Even in this life there's a kind of ebb and flow of that pain and there are times when you feel better and times you feel worse but in hell no rest day or night.

[30:37] No hope. No hope exists. When a man is sick in this life as long as there's life there's some hope isn't there? No matter how sick.

You might have a terminal disease. Incurable disease. And yet there's still some glimmer of hope that maybe you'll be cured or maybe you'll be healed or maybe someone will come up with a remedy some new breakthrough in medicine.

And so there's always some hope even a murderer who's on death row has some hope. In fact in our country they have a lot of hope that they're going to die of a natural death before they ever go to their death or their punishment.

but in hell no hope. Abandon all hope there's no hope. No hope after death for the lost person.

There's no need to pray for them because there's no hope. And I'll just end with this passage in Proverbs 11 7 when a wicked man dies this is what Proverbs 11 7 says whenever a wicked man dies his expectation will perish and the hope of the unjust perishes.

[31:55] Now think about that. When the unbeliever dies all hope is gone. All expectations of good things or better things or expectations of being rescued or expectations of any kind of hopeful outcome it all perishes.

When he dies it dies forever and ever. All hope of the unjust perishes. That's a frightening passage of scripture. Think about that.

In fact nearly all of these passages that deal with hell the place of God's judgment eternal judgment all those passages are terrifying.

we really fully think about the implications of it. Even though we cannot understand maybe the full meaning of these things.

Certainly can't understand what we actually like. It's kind of like looking at a picture of a certain place and we might be able to see the whole thing there but we cannot experience what it would actually be like to be there unless we there and thank God thank the Lord Jesus Christ and his saving grace that hopefully you can say this that we'll never have to experience that.

[33:23] And then I might just end with this thought as horrific as terrible as all that is and dark and just the images of it and the depth of the hopelessness and despair that we understand about hell Jesus experienced all that when he was hanging on the cross all of it in that one moment on the cross the full brunt of God's judgment Jesus experienced in those few hours on the cross for us for us I think so I think during that time of darkness that's when God's wrath was was focused and poured out the wrath upon all all our sin was focused on

Christ upon that cross he I don't believe went to hell we discuss that question in here but he experienced the hell of hell there upon that cross for us Thank you.