

Does Hell Really Exist?

Introduction

Hell is a literal place, just like Heaven. They both play a big part in man's future. For the redeemed; heaven is waiting, for the lost or unsaved, hell is their final destination. According to Gallup research, 94% of U.S. adults believe in God or a universal spirit; 84% believe Jesus Christ is God or the Son of God; and 53% believe in a literal hell. A Newsweek poll found that 94% of Americans believe in God; 77% believe in a heaven; 76% think they have a good or excellent chance of getting there. 58% of those surveyed believe in hell.

According to church historian Martin Marty, hell began to disappear from man's thinking in the 19th century, and no one seemed to notice. In rejecting heaven and hell, one also rejects the awesome seriousness of moral and immoral behavior. But for those who take God seriously, human freedom means the capacity to make moral decisions, which have radical and enduring consequences.

In general, more adults in the U.S. believe in hell now than did 40 years ago. The concept was losing ground as recently as 1980 when just over half of those surveyed said they believed in hell. By 1990 the percentage had risen to 60%. One 2011 survey reported only 52% believed in hell.

Mathew 7:13-14 records Jesus saying, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (KJV) There are only two roads in life, one leads to Hell, characterized by destruction and the other road leads to life or heaven. The masses, all the religions that do not accept Jesus as the only way, walk down the broad road. It is wide enough for all to fit. But the road to life is narrow...One Way...Jesus, the Christ of God.

Hell is a reality; a real place for real people. It is so bad that Jesus told the crowd in one of his sermons, (Mathew 18:8-9), "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offends thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire". (KJV)

Here are some other references concerning the reality of hell.

Mathew 10:28 " And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (KJV)

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

Mathew 25:46 “ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” KJV)

Mathew 25:41, “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:” (KJV)

In our modern vernacular, hell signifies a place of fire and punishment and this is indeed taught in the scriptures.

Hell is mentioned in the Bible (KJV) 54 times. Hell appears 31 times in the Old Testament and 23 in the New Testament. In the OT, hell is translated from the Hebrew word “Sheol.” In the NT, hell was translated from three words, Tartaroo, Hades and Gehenna. All words express some or all of these characteristics: an eternal separation from God, a place of darkness, suffering, pain and torment. It is not a place where you want to visit or move to.

In my earlier days, we used to say, flippantly, that we’d probably end up in hell, having a party with all our friends. I have since come to my senses, realizing that hell is a place of isolation. Those that go there will be alone forever. Can you imagine being in total darkness, all alone with just your suffering and pain to keep you company? Don’t think that your punishment will be administered by demons or the Devil. They will be cast into the lake of fire. There are no jailors to talk to or to call out to...just you, all alone, suffering forever.

Why would God do this to me? you might say... because you rejected the only way to Him, Jesus. He made the way possible by sending Jesus to die for your sins so you could be free to worship Him. He allowed you to live this long and has constantly called you to Himself in a variety of ways, all with no response. You sidestepped His invitation, ignored His call and refused to accept his destiny for you. However, God does not send anyone to hell. They chose not to be with Him and Hell is the only other place. The rich man lifted up his eyes in hell, in torment when he died and so will you if you reject so great a salvation. Luke 16:23

Have I scared you? I hope so because it is no laughing matter. Your eternal destiny is at stake and I want you to know the reality of hell and hopefully keep you from going there...so, here’s what you do... "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Until Next Time

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