

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT HELL - Part 1

Compiled by Karen Sue Nyquist

With additional verses on The Lake of Fire, The Outer Darkness, and The Second Death

A. We are in the end times. Jesus is coming soon! So, it is also time to ask ourselves some serious questions.

1st Question - Do I really believe that all who do not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior are going to hell?

2nd Question - Do I really believe that lost souls are in hell?

3rd Question - If I really believe, wouldn't I be praying more and working much harder to save those around me?

4th Question - Should I let the reality of hell motivate me to save souls?

5th Question - Should I use the reality of hell in witnessing to save souls? If so, how?

B. Ministering to Others and Soul Winning Using Love and Fear

These verses are directed to those who need to help Christians who are being persecuted and their faith is wavering. But listen to the seriousness.

Jude 1:22-23 (NKJV) - And on some have compassion, making a distinction; **23** but others save with fear, **pulling them out of the fire**, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

Jude 1:22-23 (NIV) - **22** Be merciful to those who doubt; **23** save others by **snatching them from the fire**; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

Jude 1:22-23 (NLT). - **22** And you must show mercy to those whose faith is wavering. **23** Rescue others by **snatching them from the flames of judgment**. Show mercy to still others, but do so with great caution, hating the sins that contaminate their lives.

Let's see what the Bible says about Hell and how that should motivate us to "Win the Lost at Any Cost!"

1. What Does God want for the Unsaved?

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not **perish** but have **everlasting life**.

2 Peter 3:9 - The Lord is **not** slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, **not willing that any should perish** but **that all should** come to repentance.

Matthew 18:14 "Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones (*children*) should **perish**.

2. What does the Bible say about perishing?

2 Peter 3:9 - The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should **perish** but that all should come to **repentance**.

Meaning of Perish - "Apollymi" Greek 622 - **to die**, perish, destroy, lose, abolish, ruin, **kill**

Psalm 92:7-9 When the wicked spring up like grass, And when all the workers of iniquity flourish, *It is* that they may be **destroyed forever**. (*For ever, for perpetuity*) 8 But You, Lord, *are* on high **forevermore**. (*Evermore*). 9 For behold, Your enemies, O Lord, For behold, Your enemies shall **perish**; All the workers of iniquity shall be scattered. **(Perish means to be destroyed forever.)**

Forever - Hebrew 5703 "ad" - for ever, perpetuity.

Forevermore - Hebrew 5769 "owlam" - always, everlasting, perpetual, evermore.

3. Why did God Create Hell? Hell was created for Satan and his angels (also called unclean spirits, demons, devils).

Matthew 25:41- "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the **everlasting fire** prepared for the devil and his angels:

C. Various Words and Interpretations for "Hell"

One reason why the subject of hell can be confusing is because there is one Hebrew word and three Greek words that are interpreted as: hell, the grave, the pit, the abode of the dead, etc. But in English, they are usually interpreted as hell. That can confuse us. Let's look at each word and how it is used.

1. **Sheol** - Used in the Old Testament - Hebrew 7585 - abode of the dead, interpreted as grave, hell, pit. It was used for various places and had several meanings.
2. **Hades** - Used in the New Testament - Greek 1492 - unseen, place of departed souls, grave, hell, a dark and dismal place in the very depths of the earth the common receptacle of disembodied spirits. Where the unsaved dead waited until their judgment. Jesus called the place where the saved dead went, "Abraham's Bosom." Since Jesus paid for our sins, we who are saved go straight to heaven.
3. **Gehenna** - Used in the New Testament - Greek 1067, Hebrew 1516, 2011 Origin - a name for the place or state of everlasting punishment. Where the unsaved go after judgment. "Gehenna originally was a valley west and south of Jerusalem where children were burned as sacrifices to the Ammonite god Moloch." (Encyclopedia Britannica) Human sacrifices continued here until the Babylonian exile. When they returned to their land, they did not return to human sacrifice. "Gehenna became a place where corpses of criminals, dead animals, and all manners of refuse were thrown to be destroyed. The Gehenna Valley was thus a place of burning sewage, burning flesh, and garbage. Maggots and worms crawled through the waste, and the smoke smelled strong and sickening." (gotquestions.org)

4. **Tartarus** - Used in the New Testament - Greek 5020 - the deepest abyss of Hades, to incarcerate in eternal torment - cast down to hell; the name of the subterranean region, doleful and dark. It is used only once in the Bible as a place demons are chained, waiting for their judgment. But another word, Abyss, seems to be referring to the same location.

D. SHEOL - Hebrew Word in Old Testament - darkness

Job 10:21 - Before I go to the place from which I shall not return, To the land of darkness and the shadow of death,

Job 11:8 - *They are* higher than heaven— what can you do? Deeper than Sheol— what can you know?

Psalms 9:17 - The wicked shall be turned into **hell**, (Sheol) *And* all the nations that forget God.

Psalms 16:10 - "You will not leave my soul in hell (Sheol), nor will you let your Holy One (Jesus) see corruption" (Jesus' body did not decay in the tomb.)

Psalms 139:8 - If I ascend into heaven, You *are* there; If I make my bed in **hell** (Sheol), behold, You *are there*.

Proverbs 15:24 - The way of life *winds* upward for the wise, That he may turn away from **hell** (Sheol) below.

E. HADES - Where the unsaved dead waited until their judgment. Jesus called the place where the saved dead went "Abraham's Bosom."

1. Jesus told this parable.

Luke 16:23 - "And being in torments in **Hades**, he (the unrepentant rich man) lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. (*Righteous Lazarus was in **Abraham's Bosom**.*) **24** "Then 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 in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. **26** And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' There are flames in Hades.

2. What else did Jesus say about Hades?

Matthew 11:23 - "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to **Hades**; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. - Jesus did miracles in that city.

Matthew 16:18 - "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of **Hades** shall not prevail against it.

3. After Jesus died, He went to Hades.

Acts 2:31 - "he (King David), foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

4. Why did Jesus go to Hades? - Many believe He went to get the keys from Satan.

Revelation 1:18 - I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

5. Some Christians believe Jesus led the righteous dead out of Abraham's Bosom.

Peter 3:18-19 - For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,

Ephesians 4:8-9 - Therefore He (*the Holy Spirit*) says: "When He (*Jesus*) ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." **9** (Now this, "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? **10** He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

6. On Easter morning, after Jesus had risen from the dead, He went to the Father.

John 20:17 - Jesus said to her (Mary Magdalene), "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.' "

7. The repentant thief on the cross went to Paradise after he died.

Luke 23:43 - And Jesus said to him (*the repentant thief on the cross*), "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Paradise - Greek paradeisos 3857

Revelation 2:7 - "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the **Paradise of God.**"

8. Now, when the saved die, we go straight to heaven to be with the Lord, we do not go to Hades.

2 Corinthians 5:8 - We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.). This is why Paul could say triumphantly:

1 Corinthians 15:55 - "O Death, where is your sting? O **Hades**, where is your victory?"

9. What else does the Bible say about Hades?

Revelation 6:8 - So I (*John*) looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of **him who sat on it was Death**, and **Hades followed with him**. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth. **These are two Demonic Spirits named Death and Hades.**

Revelation 20:13 - The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and **Hades** delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one

according to his works. **Hades is where the unsaved dead waited for judgment. So Hades is both a demon and a place. Hell (Gehenna) is the place of punishment they go to after the judgment.**

Revelation 20:14 - Then Death and **Hades** were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. *(We will study the Lake of Fire and the second death later in this lesson.)*

F. GEHENNA - Where the unsaved go after judgment.

1. What did Jesus say about Gehenna?

Matthew 5:22 - But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of **hell (Gehenna) fire.**

Mark 9:43-44 - If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to **hell (Gehenna), into the fire that shall never be quenched—** "where **'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'**"

Mark 9:45-46 - And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into **hell (Gehenna), into the fire that shall never be quenched—** "where **'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'**"

Matthew 18:9 - And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into **hell (Gehenna) fire.**

Matthew 23:15 - "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of **hell (Gehenna)** as yourselves.

Matthew 23:33 - Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of **hell (Gehenna)?**

James 3:6 - And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by **hell (Gehenna).** **A demonic power, coming from Gehenna, can influence how we speak. (This was written by James, Jesus' brother.)**

1 Corinthians 15:44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. **(When a person dies, their natural body decays in the grave or is cremated. When the person is resurrected they have a spiritual body.) (This was written by Paul.)**

2. Gehenna sounds like a scary place. Who should we fear? Man? The Devil?

Matthew 10:28 - And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul (psyche). But rather fear Him (God) who is able to destroy **both soul and body in hell (Gehenna).** **The soul and body are destroyed in Gehenna.** **5**

3. But what does destroy mean?

Destroy - Greek 622- to be lost, ruined, destroyed or killed. (*In Mt. 10:28 above.*)

4. What is the soul?

Psyche - Greek 5590 - **the soul** as an essence which differs from the body and is not dissolved by death (distinguished from other parts of the body).

5. What is a spirit?

Pneuma - Greek 4551- **a spirit**, either a human spirit, evil spirit, Holy Spirit, angelic spirit.

6. What does the Bible say about the soul and spirit?

1 Thessalonians 5:2 - Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole **spirit, soul, and body** be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 26:41 - "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The **spirit** is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Matthew 27:50 - And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, He gave up his **spirit**. (*When the spirit and soul leaves the body, the person is dead. This is the first death.*)

Revelation 6:9 - When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the **souls** of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ***The souls of the martyrs were in heaven under the altar.***

G. TARTARUS - Used only once in the Bible

2 Peter 2:4 - For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but **cast them (fallen angels - demons) down to hell** (tartarus) and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; *Fallen angels, demons, are bound in tartarus waiting for judgment.*

1. **There are other references that might be referring to Tartarus. They are speaking of the Abyzzo - Greek 12 - a bottomless pit, a very deep gulf or chasm in the lowest parts of the earth used as the abode of demons.**

Revelation 9:1-11 Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to **the bottomless pit**. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. . . . 11 And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew *is* Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

2. In the NIV the pit in Revelation 9 is called the Abyss. There are other verses about the Abyss in the NIV.

Luke 8:30-32 (NIV) - Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him. **31** And they begged Jesus repeatedly not to order them to go into **the Abyss**. **32** A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and he gave them permission.

Revelation 11:7(NIV)- **7** Now when they (the two Witnesses) have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from **the Abyss** will attack them, and overpower and kill them.

Revelation 17:7-8 (NIV) - Then the angel said to me: "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast she rides, which has the seven heads and ten horns. **8** The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and yet will come up out of **the Abyss** and go to its destruction.

3. There are Appointed Times When Demons and Satan are sent to the Abyss. Remember in 2 Peter 2:4, some demons are already there.

Matthew 8:28-29 When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gergesenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. **29** "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us **before the appointed time?**"

Revelation 20:1-3 (NIV) - And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to **the Abyss** and holding in his hand a great chain. **2** He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and **bound him for a thousand years**. **3** He threw him into **the Abyss**, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

H. The First and Second Death, the First Resurrection, the Lake of Fire

1. In the first death, the natural body dies and the spirit leaves the body.

James 2:6 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Revelation 2:11 - "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by **the second death**."

Revelation 20:4-6 - And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. **5** But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. **This is the first resurrection**. **6** Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first **7**

resurrection. Over such **the second death has no power**, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the **first resurrection**. Over such **the second death** has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

2. What is the second death?

Revelation 20:14 - Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ***(The second death happens when the unsaved are thrown into the lake of fire.)***

3. Who else will experience the second death?

Revelation 19:20 - Then **the beast** was captured, and with him **the false prophet** who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into **the lake of fire** burning with brimstone. ***The Beast (Antichrist) and the false prophet cast into the Lake of Fire.***

Revelation 20:10 - **The devil (Satan)**, 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.** *The Devil is cast into the Lake of Fire.*

Revelation 20:13-14 - The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then **Death** and **Hades** were cast into **the lake of fire**. This is the second death. *The Demons, Death and Hades, were cast into the lake of fire.*

Revelation 20:15 - And **anyone not found written in the Book of Life** was cast into **the lake of fire**. *Anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

Revelation 21:8 - 'But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars – they will be consigned to the **fiery lake of burning suffer. This is the second death.**'

4. Who will be tormented forever? - The Bible specifically mentions:

Revelation 20:10 - The devil, the beast (Antichrist), and the false prophet. (See above)

5. What happens to those who worshipped the Beast?

Revelation 14:9-11 - Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be **tormented with fire and brimstone** in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 "And the **smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever**; and **they have no rest day or night**, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

6. What will happen to the unsaved who died before and did not worship the Beast?

Matthew 3:12 “His (*Jesus*) winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat (*the saved*) into the barn; but He will **burn up** the chaff (*the unsaved*) with unquenchable fire.” (Katakaiō - Greek 2618 - to burn up, to consume by fire.)

Matthew 25:45 Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.’ 46 And these will go away into **everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into **eternal life**.” (Aionios - Greek 2166 - eternal or everlasting without beginning or without end, or without beginning or end.)

Luke 3:16-18 John answered, saying to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; **but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.**”

John 15:5-6 “I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and **throw them into the fire, and they are burned.**

Issues about Hell: There are very difficult questions that atheists and even Christians have about hell. To my surprise there is also a wide variance in the beliefs of evangelical leaders in North America on the subject of hell. They usually have scriptures to support their beliefs. I have spent 3 weeks studying what the Bible says about hell before I even looked at what others say. I wanted to have a firm knowledge before I started letting others’ opinions influence me. Our usual pat answers do not really address the seriousness nor the heart-felt sincerity of people’s concerns.

Questions about Hell

1. What kind of God would condemn someone to hell for an eternity of torture?
2. If God created everything, why doesn’t He create a place for the unsaved that is not the horrors of hell where the devils are? Does He think that they deserve as much punishment as Satan and the demons?
3. Is it right to give the same punishment to an average unbeliever in Christ as is given to Hitler, Stalin, Mao, etc. Shouldn’t the amount of punishment be matched with the the extent of the person’s sins?
4. Is it right to condemn people to hell for an eternity for only a short life time of sin? Isn’t that punishment overly excessive?
5. What if a person repents in hell, can he then go to heaven?
6. Do children go to hell? Do babies? What if their parents were not Christians?
7. Is it right to condemn people to hell who have never even heard of Jesus, or have not been taught enough about Him to make an informed decision?
8. What if people believe in God and are trying their best to follow His laws that are written in their heart, but they don’t know about Jesus?