

HELL

Biblical Terms:

Sheol is the OT word for the place of the dead. It is sometimes translated “grave.” Both the righteous and the wicked go there.

Hades literally means “the unseen.” *Hades* is the Greek word, used in the Septuagint to translate *sheol*. It is used 10 times in the NT and has the same meaning as *sheol*—the place of the departed dead, both wicked and righteous. The KJV incorrectly translates it “hell.”

Hell The Greek word is *gehenna*. It is derived from the Hebrew *ge hinnom*, which means “Valley of Hinnom”. This was an abbreviated way of referring to Ben-hinnom (a valley near Jerusalem where child sacrifices were offered to idols—Jeremiah 7:31). This valley later became the city’s dump in which fire burned continually in order to consume the garbage. In the NT, it refers to the place of conscious eternal punishment.

The Eternal State of the Lost

The lost will experience the punishment of hell eternally.

- What does Matthew 5:22 refer to it as?
- What does Matthew 5:29 reveal about it?
- According to Matthew 10:28, what makes hell worse than anything man can do to you?

Because of the word “destroy” in this verse and others like it, some groups believe that the wicked will simply be annihilated—they will cease to exist. While some believe that this will occur after they have suffered God’s wrath for a limited time, others deny conscious punishment altogether. The Greek word translated “destroy” in Matthew 10:28 is *apollumi* (a strengthened form of *ollumi*). It means to destroy utterly. Vine explains, “The idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well-being” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*). This becomes clear when you look at how it is used in other passages:

Luke 5:37

John 6:27

- What does Matthew 13:42 call hell? What happens there?
- How does Matthew 22:13 describe it?
- What facts do Matthew 25:41 reveal about hell?
- What Does Jesus refer to it as in Matthew 25:46? What is the significance of the fact that He uses the same adjective in referring to heaven?
- What does Mark 9:43-48 tell us about hell?
- How does Luke 16:23 describe hell?
- How does the rich man in v. 24 describe what he was experiencing in hell?
- What is hell called in v. 28?
- How does Revelation 14:10-11 describe the horrors of hell?
- How does Revelation 20:10 describe the punishment of the devil, beast, and false prophet?
- How do vv. 14-15 describe the fate of all whose names are not written in the book of life?

- What does Matthew 11 21-24 imply about hell?
- What does Luke 12:47-48 imply about hell?
- What does 2 Peter 2:20-21 imply about hell?

The Intermediate State of the Lost

The only difference between the intermediate state and the eternal state is that those in the first are disembodied spirits, while those in the second have resurrected bodies.

- How did Jesus describe what the rich man experienced during the intermediate state in Luke 16:22-28?
- According to v. 22, when did this begin?

Although unbelievers' souls immediately pass into a state of eternal punishment when they die, their bodies will be raised and reunited with them on the final Day of Judgment. Their body and soul will then experience their eternal punishment.

- According to Daniel 12:1-2, who will be resurrected? When will this take place? What two fates await those who will be resurrected on that day?
- According to John 5:28-29, who will be raised on that day? Why are they being raised?

- According to Matthew 25:31-32, when will the judgment take place?
- What will be the outcome for the two groups according to vv. 34, 41, and 46?
- How many resurrections are referred to in Acts 24:15? According to this verse, who will be resurrected?
- Compare Daniel 12:1-2, John 5:28-29, Matthew 25:31-32, and Revelation 20:11-15. Do you see any similarities between these various passages?

Classic Dispensationalism teaches that there will be three judgments: (1) a judgment of the nations (Matt. 25:31-46) to determine who will get to enter the millennium; (2) a judgment of believers' works to determine their degrees of reward (2 Cor. 5:10); (3) the final judgment at the end of the millennium to hand out eternal punishments for unbelievers (Rev. 20:11-15).

- The kingdom mentioned in Matthew 25:34 could be the millennial kingdom or the eternal kingdom described in Revelation 21 and 22. In light of what Jesus says in Matthew 25:46, which one better fits the context? Why?
- Is there anything in Daniel 12:1-2, John 5:28-29, or Matthew 25:31-46 that indicates that the righteous and the unrighteous will be judged at different times?
- Is there anywhere in the Bible that explicitly states that there will be more than one judgment?

