

Clear and Present Danger: Understanding the Nature of Eternal Punishment

**The Existence, Nature, Location, and
Duration of Hell**

The Existence of Hell

- The word Hell appears 54 times in 54 verses in the King James Bible.
- The Hebrew word for Hell (sheol) occurs 65 times in the Old Testament:
 - Grave—31
 - Hell—31
 - Pit—3
- Genesis 3:15—Revelation 20:10
- Deuteronomy 32:22
 - Genesis 35:18—the Biblical Definition of death is the Soul and Spirit departing the body.
 - Body—Grave
 - Soul—Hell
 - There is more involved in Hell than they body's burial in the grave. Death is also the Soul's entrance into the spiritual realm.

The Existence of Hell

- Psalm 9:17, 16:10, 18:5, 116:3,
- Daniel 12:2
- In the New Testament three Greek words are associated with Hell.
 - *Hades*
 - *Gehenna*—Jude 7— putrid dump outside Jerusalem that perpetually burned.
 - *Tartaroo*—II Peter 2:4
- While everyone who ends up in Hell will be punished eternally, Hell and the Lake of Fire are not the same place.
 - Revelation 20:13-14—Hell is the intermediate place of punishment for the lost whereas the Lake of Fire is where one serves out their final eternal sentence.

The Existence of Hell

- The strongest argument of all for Hell as a place of Punishment for those who reject God is the second member of the Godhead Jesus Christ. Not only does Jesus repeatedly affirm the existence of Hell but said more about Hell than he did about heaven during his earthly ministry.
- Matthew 5:29-30, 10:28, 11:23, 13:40-42. 23:15, 33

Nature of Suffering in Hell

- Revelation 14:10-11—teaches that the lost will be tormented with fire and brimstone.
- *Torment*: Extreme pain; anguish; the utmost degree of misery, either of body or mind, 2) that which gives pain, vexation or misery. *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*
- Matthew 8:6—the same words that are used to describe physical suffering are also used to describe the agony experienced of eternal punishment.
- Revelation 14:10—notice that they are tormented with fire and brimstone. The fire is responsible for their torment.

Nature of Suffering in Hell

- Mark 9:43-48—Christ is speaking about eternal flames that never shall be quenched.
- Mark 9:49—the fire itself is persevering them in a state of continuous torment.
- Use the illustration of a match. This fire like the fire Moses saw in the burning bush that burned but did not consume the bush.
- II Kings 6:17
- I Peter 3:19—hell is a prison of confinement not an eternal party.
- Matthew 8:12—darkness, and solitude where all you have to think about is your rejection of God.

Nature of Suffering in Hell

- The torments of Hell and the Lake of Fire are not forced on people against their will. Rather the torment is self inflicted. In other words, people who exercise their volition (free will) to not accept Christ suffer the consequences of their own poor choice.
- God would rather not send anyone to Hell which is why He sent Christ to do for our sins.
- Part of the torment of Hell will be the anguish of realizing that one used their freedom for evil and chose wrongly. Everyone in Hell will know that the pain he or she is experiencing is self-induced; hence, the “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Location of Hell

- Hell is maximum security prison located in the center of the earth.
- The Bible always speaks of Hell as being down or of being brought down to Hell.
 - Psalms 55:15, 86:13
 - Proverbs 7:27, 9:18, 15:24
 - Isaiah 5:14
 - Ezekiel 31:17
- Jonah 2:2—we have already seen that Jonah died inside the whale and went to Hell.
- Jonah 2:6—states that Jonah was help prisoner by the bars of the earth.
- Matthew 14:20—when Jesus died he went to Hell like Jonah. Where did Jesus says he was going to go after He died? To the heart of the earth. Where is Hell located? In the center or Heart of the Earth.

Duration of Suffering

- Some argue that the Greek word *aion* or *aionios* rendered everlasting in English does not always mean everlasting. They believe when the term is applied to heaven it means “unending” but when applied to hell means “ending.”
- This is both inconsistent and untrue. Two lines of evidence demonstrate this fact.
- Luke 1:33—*aion* is twice translated age. Therefore some argue that suffering will last only so long and then be over.
- Notice how verse 33, tells you how long forever is just in case you had a question. Forever means “there shall be no end.” How long is that? Everlasting.

Duration of Suffering

- The same words that are used to describe heaven as everlasting are also used to describe eternal punishment as everlasting. That is to say neither one will ever end.
- Eternal Punishment will last as long as God does. The Bible declares that God is eternal.
 - Romans 16:26—“eternal God”
 - Psalm 90:1-2—God will endure forever
 - Revelation 1:8
- God cannot allow sin in His presence.
 - Habakkuk 1:13
- Because God by His very nature cannot tolerate evil, evil persons must be separated from Him forever. Since eternal punishment is reserved for those who have lived for sin instead of for the eternal God, the Lake of Fire will endure as long as the eternal God against whom they have sinned—forever.