

# **Hell Is Real**

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**October 12, 2011**

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## Rev. 1:18

Rev. 1:18, *“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”*

The concept of eternal punishment has been written off by many people as one of those relics from a superstitious past. The trend today is toward the social gospel, with its light, fluffy, sermonettes about peace, tolerance, goodness, brotherhood, and the like, with some churches never hearing the subject of hell even mentioned.

The irony of it is the fact that the majority of the people in the world today are on their way to hell, yet it is one of the least mentioned subjects in the Bible.

Matt. 7:13-14, *“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.”*

The Bible that tells us of a wonderful heaven also tells us of an awful hell. God tells us that there is an eternal hell for all those who reject Christ and His gospel.

2 Thess. 1:7-9, *“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”*

Many are the men who have spoken out in defiance of God’s word, denying the very existence of hell, or that man even has a soul.

## Man has a soul

False teachers have time and again denied God, the work of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit in creation, and even deny that man has a soul with an eternal destiny.

Such men as Charles T, Russell and Judge Rutherford, fathers of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, deny that man has a soul. Rutherford said, “No man has a soul! ... The preachers have made the people believe that man carries a soul around in him and that when he dies the soul hikes off to some other place. ... Death is a period of absolute non-existence.”

How different from divine truth!

Can you imagine a religious person making such a statement? No wonder there are so many beliefs in the world.

Jesus said in John 5:28-29, *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”*

It must be observed that Jesus said, *“... all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth ...”* Both “good” and “evil,” not just the saved. Some people believe that the evil people when they die go straight to hell. This is just not so.

- Acts 24:15, *“... there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”*
- 1 Thess. 4:16-17, *“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”*
- 1 Pet. 4:17-18, *“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”*

Judgment won't begin until after Christ's return. Eccl. 12:7, *“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”*

The soul of man never dies.

## Hell is Bible doctrine

We must preach on hell because of the teaching of the word of God. The man of God has the solemn task of warning men to flee from the wrath of God. We need to tell men about hell, and have tears for those who are lost. We need to tell the lost about our Saviour who died to save them from hell!

We must preach on hell to warn sinners! My friends, have you ever considered the fact that you could be in hell in another minute?

David of Old Testament times declared in 1 Sam. 20:3, *“... there is but a step between me and death.”*

Beloved, it is only a step into eternity! Yes, we must preach on hell because people are dying every day without Christ. Ultimately, every person has just one minute — just one minute left before his final, eternal destiny, heaven or hell! Have you realized the seriousness of this great appointment?

Ladies and gentlemen, there **is** a place of everlasting punishment called hell! It is reserved for the devil and his angels, and for those who follow Satan, having rejected Christ. God said so, Christ said so, the apostles and inspired writers said so.

## No hell, more sin

An obvious result in our age is that we have uncontrolled sinfulness in our society!

When a child knows there is going to be discipline when he disobeys his parents, he is likely to learn respect for proper authority in the home, and eventually in all of life's relationships.

On the other hand, that child who knows there will be no punishment for his misdeeds will likely go all the way into disobedience and rebellion.

In society, if men think they can kill and steal without sure punishment, they are hardly going to hesitate when they are tempted to do so.

Many prefer to think they have only this life and when they die there is nothing.

In like manner with respect to the word of God, if a man believes he can live a life of sin and not be punished eternally, most likely he will go the limit.

Heb. 10:26-31, *“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*

Yes, men have forgotten the wrath and the justice of Almighty God.

Rev. 20:12-15, *“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the*

*book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”*

## **Who believes in hell?**

Eleven times Jesus used the Greek word Gehenna to describe hell.

In Mark 9:48, Jesus spoke of one being cast into hell, that is, Gehenna, “... *where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*”

The Son of God knew all about hell, and he spoke plainly and boldly about such things as condemnation, fire, perishing, and suffering. Jesus declared these matters because he loves us and doesn't want us to be lost in hell.

2 Pet. 3:9, “*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*”

The apostle Paul wrote about the revelation of the Lord from heaven: 2 Thess. 1:8-9, “*In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;*”

Although Paul was a powerful preacher of the grace of God and man's salvation by faith that obeys; yet, he also knew about the wages of sin being death!

Likewise, the apostle John (the apostle of love, as he has been called) believed in hell.

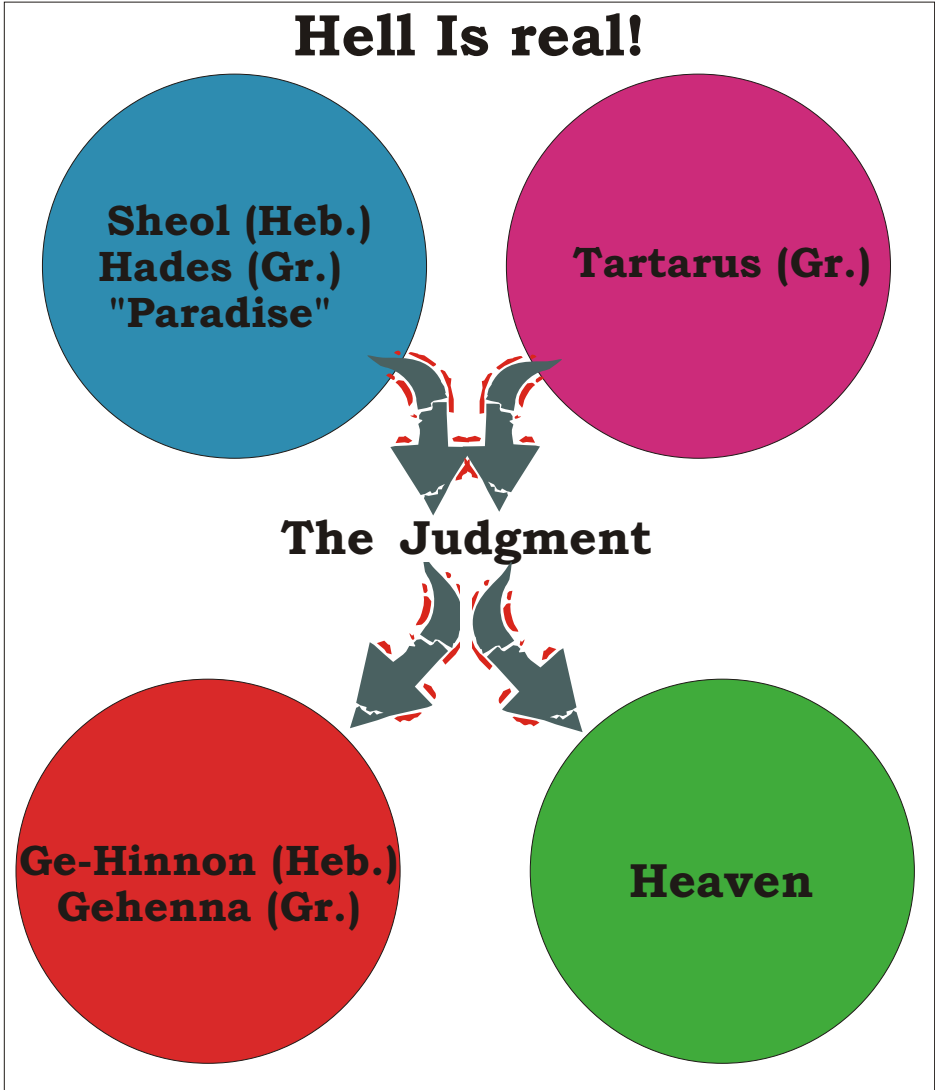
The book of Revelation, written by John, pictures not only the beauties and joys of heaven, but also the place called hell. Listen to the words of John as he wrote by inspiration: Rev. 21:8, “*But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*”

Ladies and gentlemen, the religious world doesn't hear much about hell from their modern pulpits, do they?

God has declared,

- Rom. 3:23, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,”
- Rom. 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

## Hell, Sheol, Hades, Paradise, Tartarus, Gehenna



# Hell, Sheol, Hades, Paradise, Tartarus, Gehenna

There are three Greek words, each referring to a different place, which are translated to the one word “hell” in the King James Version of the Bible. This fact has caused considerable confusion among many people in their understanding, or misunderstanding, of the Bible on the subject.

The Greek word, “Hades” (which is the same as the Hebrew word, “Sheol”) is the “unseen” or the “all-receiving” area where the souls of the dead go to await the Judgment.

This is where Jesus went when he died on the cross.

In Acts 2:31, Peter quoted Psalms 16:10, *“He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell (Sheol), neither his flesh did see corruption.”*

Christ did not go into the place of torment, for that is yet to come. He did go to the waiting place, which He referred to as “Paradise.”

Luke 23:39-43, *“And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”*

There has been much misunderstanding concerning this passage. The religious world makes the claim that the thief on the cross was saved. He simply asked Jesus to remember him, thinking they were going in separate directions after their death. Jesus simply said they would be together again in a few hours in a place he called Paradise, which was also Hades or Sheol, the waiting place. If the thief was saved, it was not as a Christian, for this was still the Jewish dispensation.

Also, we know that Jesus did not yet ascend to the heavenly paradise, for after His resurrection he told Mary Magdalene who was standing outside the sepulchre weeping: *“...Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.”* (John 20:17).

This is spoken in the future tense.

We have already mentioned “Gehenna,” which is the place of eternal punishment reserved for after the Judgment, but I would like to mention a few more things about it.

This is the Greek representative of the Hebrew “Ge-Hinnon,” which was a deep, narrow valley south of Jerusalem, where the idolatrous Jews



sacrificed their children to the god Molech. After the time of Josiah, this practice was ended, and the place became the common garbage dump for Jerusalem, where all kinds of filth, trash, animal bodies, and bodies of criminals were dumped. There was a continual stream of fire and smoke ascending the valley, and it became the symbol of the place of the everlasting punishment for the wicked.

By the way Hades will be cast into the fiery pit as well. Rev. 20:14, *“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”*

If there was only one type of hell, it wouldn't make sense to say that hell was cast into hell.

There is another Greek word that was translated as “hell” — that is “Tartarus”.

This word is used only once in the scriptures. 2 Pet. 2:4, *“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto Judgment;”*

This is not Hades, nor Gehenna.

This is a place that was prepared for the angels who sinned and also awaited the Judgment. They are chained, or locked, there.

## **All souls reserved in Hades**

All men must die, an appointment that is inevitable, and after death, the Judgment. Heb. 9:27, *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment:”*

The soul of man when he dies, however, does not go immediately to their Judgment before God and then on to heaven or hell (Gehenna), as presumed by many people.

2 Cor. 5:10, *“For we must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”*

The Judgment is a single moment in time that happens after Jesus Christ returns again to this earth, at which time we will all be gathered together before the Lord God.

When man dies, his soul goes to Hades to await the Judgment. After the Judgment, the wicked and unbelieving will be cast into Gehenna for eternal torment.

1 Thess. 4:14-18, *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For*

*the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”*

Understand what the Apostle Paul said: When Jesus comes again the dead in Christ will rise to meet the Lord in the atmosphere, then those who are still alive in Christ will also rise to meet the Lord. Judgment is yet to come.

Some think that when they die Judgment Day is at that moment for them and they will immediately go into heaven or hell. Not so! The Judgment is a time when all will stand before the Lord at the same time. And that appointed time is not until after Jesus descends from heaven with a shout and the blare from the trumpet of God that everyone will be able to hear.

That end time will be unmistakable.

There have been times in our history when certain religious people have claimed that the Lord returned secretly to them such as by the Jehovah’s Witnesses in 1918.

There is not going to be any private appearing of our Lord. When He comes again, everyone will know it.

There is no promise of anyone going to the final resting place, be it heaven or hell, until after the Judgment.

Some also think that those who are not members of Christ will go directly to Hell; that Judgment will only be for the members of Christ. Not so.

The scriptures say that God will judge His children first, then He will judge the rest. 1 Pet. 4:17-18, *“For the time is come that judgment must **begin** at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”*

To those who had never become a Christian by God’s appointed way, God’s Judgment to them may be very short.

Matt. 7:21-23, *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you:** depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”*

Those whom He knows have their names recorded in the Lamb’s Book of Life, just as those of whom Peter wrote. Phil. 4:3, *“And I intreat thee*

*also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.”*

However, it will not fare very well for those who have not their names written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. Rev. 20:15, *“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”*

That book has the entire life of the Christian recorded, all the good and bad. Rev. 20:12, *“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”*

We are to preach the word. But there is also a warning to us that if we mishandle the word of God, our names will be blotted out.

Rev. 22:19, *“And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”*

I don’t think any of us would want to face the wrath of God if our name was recorded and then blotted out for any reason, whether we reject Him or mishandle His word.

However, if we are faithful to Him, He will not blot our name out of His Book of Life. Rev. 3:5, *“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”*

## **Hell fire and brimstone**

Many times the question is asked, “Since the Bible refers to fire so frequently, is hell a place of literal fire?”

We don’t know that it is going to be a literal fire, but we do know that it will be a terrible eternal torment, as if enduring an unquenchable fire.

There can be no greater torment conveyed to the human mind than that of everlasting fire. Even the literal fire we know today is most painful and unbearable. We can hardly conceive of greater and more agonizing torture than that of fire.

Rev. 21:8, *“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”*

Dear, friends, you just cannot afford to go to hell!

## Hell is no joke

Beloved, Hell is no joke! It may rank high on the jokester's hit parade; it may feature the devil in a suit of red underwear, with horns and a pitchfork tail. Jokes may include Satan's orders to shovel the coal faster, and many similar colorful details which may evoke gales of laughter in a typical crowd of listeners.

But I'm telling you hell is no joke! Hell is an awful reality!

Heb. 10:31, "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"

## Hell — Eternity with the wicked

My friends, so many people ask the question, "What is hell like?"

Well, the word of God clearly reveals that one of the features of hell is the torment of eternal association with the wicked of all the ages.

Hell is the place where a lost soul must make his abode with the vilest sinners who have ever lived, including Satan and all of his demons.

Yes, the murderers and criminals, and all of the rest of their kind, along with the harlots, drunkards, atheists, idolaters, liars, adulterers, and all the perverts of society will be there in eternal hell; and let me tell you this, if we should go there, we will be in the midst of them forever!

Do you want to spend eternity with Satan himself?

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.*"

Yes, if we are lost in hell we must rub shoulders with the most wicked and cruel, the most lustful and abominable people of mankind. If you die unsaved, you must wallow in eternity's garbage pile forever — in hell!

## Hell — Eternal separation

My friends, Jesus once told the unsaved religious leaders of his time:

Luke 13:28, "*There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.*"

What a terrible shock it will be for them.

To the Jews, eternity would be that wonderful age when they could be with the fathers of their nation. How they longed to be with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Daniel, David, and all the great prophets of the Old Testament!

Jesus told these Jews what weeping and wailing there would be when they discovered they could not be with those they revered so much.

So many of us think of heaven in terms of reunion with some loved one who has gone on before, such as a Christian mother, a godly father, a husband, or a wife, or perhaps a baby who was snatched away in infancy.

We think of heaven in terms of a place of fellowship with the Saviour who died for us on the cross.

We long to see and talk to Peter and Paul, James, and John, and all the host of Christians from then until now.

What a horrible torment it will be for any of us if we are eternally separated from loved ones and friends!

In hell no one will be able to enjoy fellowship or companionship.

If you are lost in hell, and all your loved ones and friends are there, you will have no loving companionship, no sweet fellowship there.

Hell is to be a place of complete darkness, with weeping and wailing, with gnashing of teeth.

- There will be no good times, no parties in hell!
- It will be a place of eternal sorrow!
- There will be no time for joy and laughter.
- One cannot rejoice in pain, anguish, sorrow, with weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth on every side!
- But worst of all, it will be a complete separation from God.

## Eternal Darkness

Ladies and gentlemen, what is hell? One frightening aspect of the nature of hell is that of eternal darkness.

Jude 1:13, *“Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.”*

Can you even begin to imagine being in such a place? A place where the golden rays of the sun never shine, where the glory of the stars and the glow of the moon are never seen, never to break the total darkness of eternal night.

Can you imagine a place where the day never comes — the night lasts forever?!

If you can visualize this eternal blackness, you will have realized one — just one — of the torments of an eternal hell.

## Brethren, do you have any idea how long an eternity is?

The history of man on the earth is about 6,000 years.

The Patriarchal Age started about 4000 B.C.

God's promise to Abraham was about 2000 B.C.

The Day of Pentecost (when the church was established) was 30 A.D.

And the Christian age is now 1981 years old (at 2011).

All-in-all, the history of man is about 6,000 years.

Remember Job said after this life his days would be multiplied as the sand.

- Job 29:18, *"Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the sand."*
- Psalms 90:10, *"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."*

Three score and ten is 70 years; fourscore is 80 years. Some live less; few live to be 100 years.

Let's say one grain of sand represents one day of your life and you live to be 80; that's 80 grains of sand. If you were to hold 80 grains of sand in your hand you would hardly notice it wouldn't you? A tiny breath could blow it out of your hand.

For the sake of discussion, say one square inch of sand contained 6000 grains of sand, or 6000 days. One cubic foot would contain 10,368,000 grains of sand; that many grains of sand in days would be 28405 years.

When you consider all of the grains of sand on all of the beaches (plus all the sand in all of the combined deserts!) of the world, the mind cannot fathom the number of days or years that would be.

If each grain of sand represented a day, all the grains of sand the world over could not match the amount of time in eternity! Heaven or Hell.

The pleasure of sin for just a season is certainly not worth giving up an eternity for.

Job 29:18, *"Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the sand."*

That's how Job was able to endure everything Satan threw at him. The average life of man is about 70 grains of sand. That's absolutely nothing compared to eternity!

All the pleasures of this life are not worth an eternity in Hell. But, just think, brothers and sisters, about an eternity in heaven. How grand that will be!

Beloved, hear me! Are you listening? Hell is an eternal night for every sinner who leaves this world without Christ! The time we live on this earth is just a very microscopic spec. It cannot compare to eternity.

## **No exit from hell**

There is an exit from this earth — death!

There is an exit from Hades — for after it is the Judgment.

But there will be no exit from Gehenna — eternal torment!

There is only one way to escape hell, and that is to never go there in the first place!

The doors of hell will be closed forever. The duration of punishment for the wicked and ungodly will last just as long as heaven will last for the saved. Matt. 25:46, *“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”*

Wouldn't you rather spend your eternity in heaven?

## **It will not be an annihilation**

The Day of Judgment will be a day of destruction for the sinner and ungodly.

- 2 Pet. 3:7, *“But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”*
- 2 Thess. 1:7-9, *“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”*

Destruction on this dreadful day does not mean annihilation, but it is continuing; it is eternal.

## Conclusion

Dear friends, it doesn't have to be that way.

Psalms 23:1-6, *“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”*

What a contrast! Death portals into heaven; or death's gateway into hell!

Jesus himself declared that man has a choice. Hear Him!

Mark 16:15-16, *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”*

Let these words of Christ ring in your hearts today and all the days of your life:

Matt. 7:13-14, *“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.”*

The way to hell is Satan's broad way — It is going to be crowded, but room for you too, if you insist on going there.

Dear friends, you don't really want to go to hell!









