

A Biblical Essential: The Doctrine of Hell

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Hell exists and hell is real. One of the core, orthodox doctrines that many seem to wage war against in this present day is the doctrine of eternal hell. Hell does not end. Hell should not be discussed as if it were an insignificant matter. Perhaps no doctrine in all the world exists that should both bring humans to their knees in utter fear and should compel sinners to fly to Christ, the only Refuge, so as to find safety from the firestorm of divine fury that perpetually occurs in hell.

In this brief essay, I will expound on the doctrine of hell by providing **fifteen biblical realities of this place of torment.**

1. Eternal

Hell is eternal. That is to say that hell does not come to an end. It endures perpetually. There is no rest, no end in sight, no termination, no extinction, no annihilation. There is no soul sleep. The sinful soul that dies will enter a state of eternal judgment without end. After millions and billions of ages have passed, one will have barely just begun to endure hell. So long as heaven is eternal, hell is eternal. As long as heaven endures, hell endures. As long as the glory of the redeemed exist, so will the punishment of the damned exist. Hell is eternal, unending, without termination. What a horror! Perhaps one may endure some degree of pain knowing that an end is in sight; but this shall never be known in hell. It is eternal.

2. Punishment

In hell God punishes all sinners. Sin is lawlessness. To sin is to break God's Law and to sin is to violate God's glory. To sin is to incur punishment. To receive a punishment is not unfair; rather, it must be fair. To not receive a punishment for a crime committed would be unfair. But for God to punish transgressors of His holy Law who are fully deserving of the just sentence and the righteous judgment is not unfair; it is right, good, fair and just. Hell is punishment. Nothing about hell is unfair. There is nothing about hell that the sinner did not merit. To sin is to incite God's anger and it thus expects His punishment.

3. Isolation

Contrary to what some scoffers may suggest, hell has no parties. No friendships exist in hell. Sure the screams of the crushed shriek through hell perpetually but there is no rest, no friendships, no sympathy. Hell is banishment. Hell is eternal blackness forever isolated in the eternal chains of isolation. To reside in hell is to be in isolation forevermore. Heaven is a world of fellowship, love, friendships, communication, and corporate worship. Hell, on the contrary, is a lonely state of horror, hatred, banishment, and isolation.

4. Blackness

God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. To be opposed to God is to be in the darkness. Jesus came as the Light of the world. Hell, however, is darkness. There is no light in hell. There is no flickering light that can give warmth, guidance, comfort or shelter to any of hell's criminals. Hell is a thick blackness akin to the blackness that God sent upon Egypt; it was a blackness that was so thick it could be felt. Hell is utter blackness, banishment, terror, torment, and endless aeons of darkness.

5. Fire

Amazingly, hell is blackness yet hell also is a place of fire. Hell has flames. Hell will forever and ultimately be cast into the eternal abode of the wicked – the Lake of Fire. It will be a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. To be in a hot oven for 1 hour would inflict mortal wounds; to reside in an oven for 1 year would be inconceivable; to dwell in an oven for 1 thousand years goes beyond what the human mind can really ponder. And yet to think that souls will really, literally, consciously and eternally dwell in an everlasting Lake of Fire is beyond the human imagination.

6. Without Rest

Hell has no rest, no end, no termination, no painlessness, no ceasing. To reside in hell is to reside in a restless state where the wrath of God relentlessly rests upon all rebels without rest day or night. None shall ever find a moment of comfort. None in this eternal pit will ever find an hour of respite. Everyone in hell together suffers under the sentence of eternal wrath without rest, without a lightening up of divine fury that is being released. To know Christ is to experience joyous rest. To live apart from Christ is to live in perpetual fear. Jesus welcomes all who would come to Him and find rest for their weary souls!

7. Conscious

Hell is a place where the worm does not die and where the fire is not quenched. To live in hell is just that — to live. None eternally grow extinct and none are annihilated in hell. All endure forevermore with consciences that will torment them ceaselessly. Those who die will remember the things they had while on earth. The damned in hell will remember all of the gospel presentations that they heard. The consciences of the tormented in hell will terrorize them as they continuously remember hearing the preacher give the gospel, as they remember reading that gospel tract, as they recall hearing that street preacher tenderly yet urgently pleading for souls to repent and come to Christ! Consciences will remember the gospel that was once offered to them but now is shut off to them forevermore. They will remember their rejection of the gospel and their consciences will unendingly hound them because they heard the Truth, rejected it, and are now suffering for it.

8. Infinitely Harsh

The reason hell is infinitely harsh is because sin is treason against an infinite King. To sin incurs a penalty. But the measure of the penalty is governed by the dignity of the one sinned against. To disobey the Law will incur a temporary penalty. To disobey God's Law is to incur an eternal penalty. God is an infinite God and all sin against an infinite God deserves an infinite punishment. God offers infinite love and to disregard this love and trample on it heedlessly is to exchange infinite love for infinite hatred. Thus, hell is infinitely harsh. No mercy enters into hell. Hell knows no grace. Love is found only in heaven, not in hell. There is infinite mercy and tenderness in heaven. There is infinite harshness and fury in hell. To sin against God requires that He mete out His infinite justice upon the rebel. Thus, hell must be infinitely and divinely harsh.

9. Agonizing

To agonize speaks of pain and hurt. Hell is a place of dreadful agony. Nothing enters hell that escapes the relentless pains of agony. The reason why hell is agonizing is because hell is punishment. The reason that hell is punishment is because God has established His Law and wicked men have violated all of those laws. Therefore, it must be that hell is agonizing because the dreadful wrath of divine fury is unleashed upon the sinner in hell forever. This agony denotes dreadful pain and horrible suffering.

10. Just

Nothing could be more fair than hell. What every sinner fully deserves is the weight of Omnipotent wrath because every person has sinned against God Almighty and is fully deserving of God's *just* wrath. For God to dispense wrath in hell does not show Him to be unkind, unfair, or mean; rather, it demonstrates His justice, His righteousness, and His goodness. Those who reject the notion that hell is just are those who do not understand the real nature of mankind and just how wicked, depraved, vile, corrupt, and despicable all people are in the sight of an infinitely holy God. Thus, God the Judge fairly, rightly, perfectly and justly repays each person according to His ways. Man has sinned so God must justly punish. This is right, praiseworthy and according to God's nature. God must punish sin.

11. Deserved

None in hell can point the finger at God and suggest that they suffer unfairly. None can say that they do not deserve the punishment. All in hell fully deserve the recompense they receive. God promises to repay all those who are storing up wrath for themselves by their lack of repentance and unbelief. Sinners get what they deserve in hell. Every person in heaven has not gotten what he deserved, since he deserve hell. On the contrary, every person in hell receives exactly what he deserves. All liars will receive the due penalty in hell. All sexual immoral ones will receive what they deserve in hell. All unbelievers, all those caught in false religions, damning cults, and gospel-denying waves of so-called 'Christianity' will receive the due penalty for their error in hell. Again, everyone in hell is fully deserving of the condemnation and judgment they receive without end.

12. God's Presence in Anger

What makes hell hell is not that God is absent. What makes hell so bad is that God is there – in unrelenting, undiminishing, unending hatred. Those who are cast away from the presence of the Lord in hell, as the Scripture says, are those who are cast away from the presence of His eternal love, compassion, mercy, and deliverance. But those in hell will forever reside in the immediate presence of God's holiness, righteousness, justice, wrath, and vengeance. Perhaps those in hell feel the utter holiness of God to such a degree that these unbelieving rebels could only wish that God's presence might be removed even for a moment! What makes hell hell is not that God is not there, or absent, or not in control. No! God controls hell. God is the One who casts all nonbelievers there. God casts Satan there, the AntiChrist, and the false prophet. Thus, hell is excruciatingly horrible because God's wrath is there without a drop of mercy; his hatred without His love.

13. Imminent

Every nonChristian is one step away from eternal hell. Every unbeliever walks in his life as if he walking on a thin thread over the very flames of hell that singe him every step of the way. Little does he know that the thread will soon break and his next step will plunge him into the eternal abyss of everlasting hell where God's Almighty fury will forever drown him without a moment of respite. O the fool who lives his life rejecting Christ! He is juggling the fires of hell upon his chest hoping to not get burnt. He is walking on hot coals hoping that his feet will not be scorched. The unbeliever walks as a blind man nearing the edge of a cliff at which point he will, in just one step of his foot, cast himself down into the flaming fire of the mouth of God's wrath. Hell is imminent. Every person who lives apart from Christ will eventually die and immediately be fall into hell. And all who have not repented and believed in Christ alone will, in a moment's time at the very instant of death, will awaken to everlasting darkness and agony. All who arrogantly live now rejecting Christ will meet Christ, when their eyelids close in death, not as Savior and deliverer, but as Judge and executioner. One step from hell. O nonbeliever! Beware, you walk one step away from eternal fire!

14. Unchanging

None who enter hell leave. There has never been a man who entered the eternal pains of hell who came out for a respite. None who write fanciful books about entering hell speak the truth. The Bible alone provides the truth about this eternal place of horror. All who enter hell shall never depart. When God casts a soul into hell, he will forever make his home there. There will come a moment, however, when all the dead will be called forth before the Great White Throne Judgment seat of Jesus Christ. And all those who are brought before this sovereign judgment will be nonbelievers and their names will not be found in the Lamb's Book of Life. They will, however, be judged according to the deeds which are recorded in the books. When Christ tells them to depart and to be cast into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and His angels, there is a great chasm fixed between the Lake of Fire and the New Heavens and the New Earth. None can cross this chasm. It is an impassible gulf that exists between the two destinies. It is an ocean that cannot be crossed. None who enter hell will leave. It is unchanging. The sentence is declared. The matter is settled and fixed. All who die in unbelief will reside in unbelief forevermore and will abide in hell perpetually for billions and billions of ages to come.

15. Real

Contrary to what some may suggest, hell is not myth. Hell is real. Hell is not made up. Hell is more real than your life right now. Hell presently exists. And millions and millions right now loudly shriek with groans and cries as they suffer the weight of God's fury. Every second around the world, someone dies and enters through the the place where they cannot exit: hell. Yes, hell is real. Some may scoff. Many may doubt. Preachers may ignore it. Theologians may endeavor to explain it away. Scholars may mock. But God Himself declares hell to be true because He created it, He runs it, He owns it, He judges people there. Yes, hell is real. Better to be warned about it now and to flee for your life than to die and then find out that you cannot escape the reality of hell. It is real; yes, more real than your life now! Hell is real! Flee! Turn! Repent!

Hell is real! And hell is inescapable for the sinful soul! All people everywhere deserve this wrath of God in hell. O the dreadful state of man's soul! But O, poor soul, there is one solution! Jesus Christ has come and He has suffered and died for sinners! He bore this dreadful curse for sinners! God treated Christ as if Christ lived the life of His people. He suffered in their place. He took the curse in their stead. He suffered anguish, receiving all the divine blows, the hostile wrath, the just fury of God in the place of His people. Jesus paid it all! Jesus took the blame! He bore the penalty! He suffered anguish! He became a sin offering by dying in the place of sinners! O sinner headed for hell, look to Christ, and escape for your life! Turn! Turn! Repent! Repent! Look to Christ! Fly to Him now, at this moment, so that your soul may be spared by Him who endured wrath in your place!