

IS THERE REALLY A PLACE CALLED HELL?

Part 1 "Gehenna"

By: Phillip Hayes

Having been raised in a Christian home and influenced by fundamental Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal teaching, I never questioned the existence of hell. Heaven and Hell were very real places. Heaven was to be gained by the believers in Jesus and Hell was for sinners. Heaven was a place of awesome beauty and peace where Jesus lived and Hell was an awful place of burning fire and brimstone where the sinner was punished forever. I never questioned the existence of either place.

Because of my upbringing, I was shocked when I later heard teaching that denied the existence of Hell and Heaven. How could anyone come to such conclusions?

Recently, my wife was watching some street preachers on You Tube. The street preachers were crying out against sin and preaching the judgment of God. She told me that most of the people that confronted the street preachers said, "God, is love. 'God is not a God of judgment!'" The people were offended by the preaching!

I believe the Gospel has been so perverted that when the Truth is preached, people believe it is a lie! God is love! However, God is also a God of judgment!

This "God is only love" idea has becoming the basis of the disbelief in a burning hell that sinful people will spend eternity in. They question, why would a loving God send

anyone to a burning hell to be punished forever?

There are two different Greek words translated "hell" in the New Testament. One is Strong's number 86, and the original Greek word was "hades" which means: "The place of departed souls - The grave, hell. The other word was Strong's number 1067; the meaning here was quite different than hades. It is, *Gehenna* which means: Valley of Hinnom, Valley of Jerus, A place of EVERLASTING punishment - hell. The Valley of Hinnom was located on the south side of Jerusalem, which served as the city's "garbage dump" during Jesus' time. The fires that burned there never went out! I believe Jesus used this literal always burning place to demonstrate to the people of His time how horrible hell is.

As did His contemporaries, Jesus referred to *Gehenna* as the place where "the fire is not quenched" and where "their worm does not die" (Mark. 9:48).

Therefore, the word hell in our King James Bible sometimes means the grave, but in other places it means a place of torment! We will not be discussing the grave in this article, but *Hell*

All but one of the letters of the Apostle Paul mentions the wrath or judgment of God on sin. And of the twelve uses of the word *gehenna* (the strongest word for hell) in the New Testament, eleven come from the lips of Jesus himself! In fact, the Savior taught more about hell than He did about heaven! Of the more than 1850 verses recording the words of Christ, 13% pertain to the topics of judgment and hell. Of the 40 or so parables uttered by Jesus, more than half relate to God's eternal judgment on sin. Surprisingly, the much beloved "Sermon on the Mount" contains some of Jesus' most straightforward words about hell!

Jesus used the word *gehenna* in Luke 16 where He talked about the rich man and the beggar man going to their rewards after their lives on this earth was over.

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and

fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: [Luke 16:19]

Here was a man that had it made. He was a man that had money, things, houses, and lands. No doubt he had servants. No doubt he had many possessions because he was a rich man.

And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. [Luke 16:20-21]

Here was a man that was most miserable indeed. Today we hear so much about prosperity. We have preachers that preach that you can have the world, and the riches of the world, and still have God. Many of them tell you that if you don't have riches then God's blessing is not upon you. Many of them preach from the pulpits of America and throughout the world, telling people that if they are not blessed financially and materially, they are not blessed of God.

In Luke 16, we read about two men. The Lord Jesus said they were certain men, which indicates that He was describing an actual event, not a parable or allegory as some contend. One was a rich man that had the things of the world the other was a beggar man that had nothing. He laid at the rich man's table hoping he could get some crumbs that might fall to the floor. He had sores, and even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The rich man had possessions; he had what the world had to offer. Today, the message is getting all that you can get. Get everything that you can get hold of. Just ask the Lord, and He will bless you with it. With that kind of message it would seem that the rich man was the one blessed of God and be carried away to heaven, but we find just the opposite here. We find that this poor beggar man full of sores, having to compete with the dogs for the crumbs from this man's table was the one carried away to heaven. The rich man went to hell!

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by

the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And 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. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. [Luke 16:22-31]

Listen at this one more time. Verse 23:

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. [Luke 16:23]

Verse 24 partially: *"I am tormented in this flame"*; Verse 25 partially: *"And thou art tormented"*; Verse 28 partially: *"They also come in this place of torment"*.

In this particular place, and other places where Jesus talked about the destiny of those that would not receive Him as Lord, this word hell was *gehenna* a place of everlasting punishment or everlasting torment.

You don't hear much preaching about hell anymore. No matter where you go, you don't hear anybody preaching about a hell that is prepared for those that refuse the Blood Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. I want you to know there

is a heaven to gain, and a hell to shun. No matter what our modern day charismatic preachers say, Jesus said there was a place of everlasting torment!

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We are born in sin. We are shaped in iniquity. We come into this world a baby, but we are born a sinner. Our destiny, because we are flesh, is this place of torment. But, you don't have to go to this place of torment; God has made a way of escape for everyone: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* [John 3:16].

There is a hell, a place called *gehenna*; that is a place of torment. The torment in this place is not for a second, or a minute, or an hour; but Jesus said, *gehenna*; a place of everlasting, or eternal torment. Isn't life here in this world torment enough without being tormented forever and ever in the flames of hell fire? I don't know about you, but this present life is a miserable life. Even with Christ, Paul testified that without hope of life beyond this mortal existence, he would be a man most miserable. With Christ, we have the hope of glory. Without Him, there is no hope, and hell awaits you.

You think you are going to have a good time, so you get high on drugs. You think you are having a good time when you get high on alcohol, or sex, or rock-n-roll. But your cheap thrill only lasts a little while, and when you come down off your moment of pleasure, you are tormented. Yes you are! You hate yourself.

Isn't it enough to be tormented in this life? I don't know about you, but I have had friends and loved ones to die without Jesus, and I know that their destiny was not heaven, but hell. They had a good time, they really thought they were living it up. But, many of them had confessed to me; "I'm miserable, I hate myself, I hate what I am doing, I hate the life that I am living." I would say that Jesus is the answer. Jesus

can set you free. Jesus can make it all right. Jesus can save your soul if you will repent and turn to the Lord. Then they would consider the blood, they would consider the Name, and they would consider the Word, they would consider how Jesus could really change their lives because they would see others living Godly. They would see others that were delivered. Their desire was to be delivered, but they let the devil lie to them. They let the devil deceive them, most times because of their friends or family.

People on their way to hell don't want to go by themselves. They want to take somebody with them. Many people today are in a league with the devil. They are on their way to hell, and they want to take somebody with them. They won't tell you, "I don't want to go to hell by myself, come go to hell with me." But they will try to sway you to enjoy the pleasures of sin with them; "let's get drunk, let's get some dope, let's party, let's go out tonight." It is usually always, "Let's". Because nobody wants to go to hell by themselves! They want to take you with them. Are you listening to me? Your friends will tell you that nobody lives right anyway! Why, there's nothing to church! They will say, "stay away from those church people, they are just a bunch of sissies." What hindered me from serving the Lord for years was my buddy, my pal; good old boys, having a good time. You see they were on their way to hell and they wanted to take me with them.

But thanks to God; one day the Holy Ghost shined upon me and brought me to the cross of Jesus. And now, I don't want to go to heaven by myself. I want to take somebody to heaven with me!

I found out my good old buddies, my old friends no longer wanted to have anything to do with me, because I didn't want to go to hell with them anymore. When you get truly born again, you won't have worldly friends anymore. You find out quickly that light has no fellowship with darkness. You still love them but fellowship is broken because you have

entered into the glorious light of Christ. You don't need them any longer. You now have godly brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers you never knew about.

There is a place called *gehenna!* Nobody preaches about hell anymore. Nobody warns people to flee the wrath to come anymore. They won't warn people about this place called "*gehenna.*" I have been to funerals and heard preachers try to preach the deceased into heaven. You die in a car wreck drunk; you are most assuredly in danger of hell fire. The Bible says, "*No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God.*" (See 1Corinthians 6:10; Galatians 5:21)

Look at the world around you. Demon possessed Islamic terrorists mutilating and beheading innocent men, women and children throughout the world. In our own country, children are killing children and even their own parents. Parents are killing their children; some even before they are born! Time after time, we hear about children that are thrill killers; committing murder seemingly for the sheer joy of it and then committing suicide! Where do you think these murderers that have taken their own lives are today? I can tell you; they are in hell! It is sickening to hear how the news media, psychiatrists, and preachers try to explain what was wrong with these killers. I know what was wrong! It was sin! They were possessed with a devil!

They were used by the devil but God is going to be glorified because of their actions. God has a way of turning the tables on the devil. Watch for revival in the world, and across this nation. There is an awakening coming! I believe that people in America are beginning to realize that there is something terribly wrong in this nation, especially among young people. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord will lift up a standard against him! We need some old time hell fire and brimstone preachers to rise up in this country and throughout the world and tell people the truth. There is a hell to shun and a heaven to gain!

It is time to wake up folks. Somebody's going to hell! God is telling us this place Jesus called *gehenna* is going to be filled with people. And there will be many there that once called Jesus Lord! I will prove it with the Word. *Gehenna* (HELL) is a place of torment. You better know the Lord. The rich man cried out; *"Lazarus come and just touch the tip of my tongue for I am tormented in these flames."*

How many of you have ever held your hand over a candle to see how long you could hold it there? In Foxes Book of Martyrs they were going to burn a Christian at the stakes because he wouldn't deny the Lord. While this man was in his prison cell, he lit a candle time after time. He would put his hand over the candle and jerk it back in pain. After a while he could hold it a little longer. Finally he held it there until the flame came to the top of his hand. When the flame came to the top of his hand, he said, "God I'm ready to offer up my body. I am now ready to die for the Lord."

Think about it! To burn your body accidentally is extremely painful, but think about burning in hell for eternity! Wake up! Wake your children up! Wake up your neighbors! There is a place of everlasting torment called hell to avoid. The rich man said, *"Let him go and tell my brothers about this terrible place of torment!"* *"Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."*

They didn't believe Moses. They didn't believe the prophets. They wouldn't believe if one rose from the dead! And today, they still don't believe there is a place of everlasting torment! Some of you wouldn't believe Jesus if He was standing here. You wouldn't believe Paul if he was standing here. You wouldn't believe Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, or any of the prophets if they were standing here. I'm telling you the

Word of God is true. There is a hell, an everlasting place of torment. Jesus meant what He said, and He said what He meant!

A preacher not long ago had the audacity to tell folks that God didn't mean for people to actually *fear* God; He just meant for us to *reverence* Him! But the Bible tells us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; (*Philippians 2:12*). Fear and trembling go together. Respect and trembling don't go together. Fear, *real fear* is going to bring trembling!

As a matter of fact Apostle Paul wrote the following concerning a man that the church received with fear and trembling: *"For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth. And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him"* [2Corinthians 7:14-15].

I believe most Christian's rebelliousness prove they have no fear of God, let alone a minister of God! I've had the fear of God on me and I have actually trembled before a Holy God knowing that God could strike me dead at any time. The Bible said, the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

In the book of Revelation we find an angel preaching the everlasting gospel crying, *"Fear God and give Him glory for the hour of His judgement is come."*

There is little fear of God today. Instead of hell fire and brimstone preaching, all you hear about is prosperity and blessing packages. Today, many preachers have holy oil, holy cloths, holy water from the Jordan river, prayer robes, prophets staffs, shofars and other such nonsense for sale. Their ministries are filled with gimmicks. They are playing games with people and with God. They are playing with fire, and don't have enough sense to know what they are doing. I guarantee you judgment day is coming when God is going to separate the sheep from the goats. There is a place called

gehenna for the make believers and the unbelievers. Jesus described Hell as an everlasting place of torment. Several times Jesus emphasized the horror the rich man was suffering in this place; *"I am tormented in these flames . . . thou art tormented . . . they also come to this place of torment."*

The only thing that can save a man is the truth. *"You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free."* You are not going to be saved through some kind of religion. You are not going to be saved by men's doctrines. You are only saved through the blood atonement of Jesus Christ, by repenting of your sins and being baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and receiving God's Holy Spirit. You must be filled with the Holy Ghost to be able to obtain salvation for the spirit, the water, and the blood agree in one. The truth shall make you free. I made up my mind. I will make heaven my home. You can play around in the world if you want to. You can play with the devil and play with the church world if you want to. I know my God has called us to be a separated people, a holy nation, a peculiar people. God has separated us to be the sons of God in this end time. The sons of God are coming forth without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation of whom ye shine as lights in the world. I made up my mind to make heaven my home. I am going to shun this place Jesus called *gehenna!*

Today, many are discussing this place called Hell. The doctors of theology are standing in the pulpits using Greek and Hebrew and all manner of translations. Some are telling people that hell is just going to last for a second; you probably won't even feel it, God is a good God, God isn't going to burn anyone in hell for everlasting, God is a God of love. God isn't going to send anyone to hell. Jesus was only telling a story about hell, why, it's not even a real place, *they say!*

Yes, they say! But what does God say?

Next month Part 2: "Wake Up CHURCH"