

HELL--No Joke!

Luke 16:19-31

East Berlin Community Church

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March 10, 2024

Introduction

- My dislike of horror films
- “Hell” as portrayed by advertisers today
- Americans’ belief in “hell”
- The inevitability of the final judgment at the Great White Throne.
 - Hebrews 9:27-- *“as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment”*

HELL--No Joke!

A. The Derivation of “Hell”

1. The *“Lake of Fire”*
 - Revelation 20:15-- *“And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”*
 - a. The eternal place of torment for the Antichrist and false prophet
 - Revelation 19:20-- *“the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.”*
 - b. The eternal place of torment for Satan and his demonic forces
 - Revelation 20:10-- *“the devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”*
2. *“Gehenna” or the “valley of Hinnom”*
 - a. Garbage dump near Jerusalem (Joshua 15:8)
 - b. Location of pagan sacrifices to Molech (Jeremiah 7:3; 2 Kings 23:10)
 - c. Became synonymous with the place of final judgment or hell.

B. The Description of Hell

- Luke 16:19-31-- *“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. “Then 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 in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’ “Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham said to him, “They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, “No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ But he said to him, “If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’ ”*

1. **Jesus teaches the truth about heaven. *Can we trust Him to tell the truth about hell?***
 - John 14:1-2-- *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."*

2. **Understanding the meaning of "Hades"**
 - a. **Two compartment view of "hades"**
 - 1) Lower compartment-- place where the unrighteous went after death to await the final judgment
 - 2) Upper compartment-- or "Paradise" where the righteous resides after death.

 - b. **"Hades" has a negative connotation**
 - Matthew 16:18-- *"on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."*

 - c. **"Hades" will one day be cast into hell**
 - Revelation 20:14-- *"Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."*

3. **Experiencing the place called "Hell"**
 - a. **A Place of Torment**
 - Luke 16:23-25-- *"And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then 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 in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.'"*
 - Luke 16:28-- *"for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'"*
 - 1) **The physical torment of hell**
 - Matthew 13:40-42-- *"Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

 - 2) **The emotional torment of hell-- *"weeping and gnashing of teeth"***

 - 3) **The never ending torment of hell**
 - Revelation 14:11-- *"the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."*

 - b. **A Place of Unmet Thirst**
 - Luke 16:24-- *"Then 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.'"*
 - 1) **Craving will not be satisfied.**
 - 2) **Wickedness generates its own suffering.**
 - Revelation 22:11a-- *"He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still."*

 - c. **A Place of Isolation and Separation**
 - Luke 16:26-- *"And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'"*
 - 1) **The rich man appears to be alone in hell**

- 2) **Hell is a place of total darkness**
 - Jude 13-- *"for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."*
- 3) **Isolated and separated not only from family and friends, but from the presence of God.**
 - a) **Many today believe that punishment in hell is temporary.**
 - b) **Jesus taught that there is a great gulf fixed and no bridge to cross over from hell to heaven.**
 - c) **Separation from God will be for all eternity**
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:7b-9 -- *" Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."*
- 4) **Rich man's concern for family members that they escape torment in hell**

4. Degrees of Punishment in Hell ?

- a. **Jesus Christ will judge fairly based on the amount of revelation one has.**
- b. **Scriptural evidences for degrees of punishment in hell**
 - Matthew 10:14-15-- *"And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!"*
 - Mark 12:38-40 -- *"Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, 40 who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."*
 - Luke 12:47-48 -- *"that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more."*
- c. **Bottom line:** Everyone will suffer intolerable, indescribable misery and torment, and will be utterly and eternally separated from God and all of His goodness.

C. The Dilemma of Hell: *"How can a loving God torment someone in hell forever?"*

1. **An Examination and Evaluation of the belief of Annihilationism**
2. **Different Question: How could a loving God stand by and watch His Son experience hell for mankind as He hung on the cross?**
 - a. Jesus Christ fully experience hell for us as He hung on the cross.
 - b. Why? Because God the Father knew that it was the only way for you and I to experience heaven.
3. **Hell is "God's complement to human freedom." Men choose to go to hell and God respects their choices.**