



True Bible Teaching About... “Heaven and Hell”

HEAVEN

It is the dwelling place of God.

- Matt. 6:9 : *“Our Father, which art in heaven...”*
- Psa. 2:4 : *“He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh...”*
- Psa. 11:4 : *“The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD’s throne is in heaven.”*
- Psa. 14:2 : *“The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men...”*

It is the dwelling place of angels.

- Matt. 18:10 : *“...in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”*
- Luke 1:19 : *“...I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God.”*

It is the temporary dwelling place of Jesus Christ.

- Psa. 110:1 : *“The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”*
- Acts 3:20 : *“And God shall send Jesus Christ...whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things.”*
- Acts 1:11 : *“...this same Jesus...shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”*

It is not the dwelling place of man.

- John 3:13 : *“And no man hath ascended up to heaven...”*
- Acts 2:34 : *“For David is not ascended into the heavens...”*

Man’s future lies on the earth, not in heaven.

True Bible Teaching About...Heaven and Hell



- Matt. 5:5 : *“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”*
- Psa. 115:16 : *“The heaven, even the heavens are the LORD’s: but the earth hath He given to the children of men.”*
- Rev. 5:10 : *“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.”*
- Dan. 7:27 : *“And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints...”*

Our inheritance is with Christ in heaven, but will be brought with him when he returns.

- Rev. 22:12 : *“Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”*
- Col. 3:4 : *“When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”*
- Matt. 16:27 : *“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”*
- Phil. 3:20, 21 : *“...in heaven, from whence also we look for the saviour the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our lowly body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body...”*

HELL

The word translated “hell” comes from one Hebrew word “sheol”, and two Greek words “hades” and Gehenna”.

“sheol” and “hades” have similar meanings, - “the place of the dead” and “the grave”. In fact, both words are translated into the word “grave” as well as the word “hell”.

For example:

True Bible Teaching About...Heaven and Hell



Gen. 42:38 : *“...then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.”*

Psa. 6:5 : *“For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave, who shall give thee thanks?”*

1Cor. 15:55 : *“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”*

Neither “sheol” nor “hades” give any hint that it is a place of tormenting fire for departed immortal souls.

The other Greek word “Gehenna” is associated with fire, but not as an eternal punishment for the wicked.

“Gehenna” would be well known to the Jew. It is from a Hebrew phrase for “Valley of Hinnom”, and was a place where idolatry and sacrificing to pagan idols was practiced.

2 Chron. 28:3 : *“Moreover he (Ahaz) burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire...”*

Jer. 32:35 : *“And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire...”*

These wicked rites were wiped out and the place defiled by Josiah, and king of Judah.

2 Kings 23:10 : *“And he (Josiah) defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech.”*

Historians tell us that this place became a burning garbage dump outside the walls of Jerusalem, and even the bodies of criminals were thrown there.

Jesus alluded to this place in Mark 9:43, 44:

“And if they hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell (gehenna),

True Bible Teaching About...Heaven and Hell



into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

Jesus seemed to be alluding to the worms which continually preyed on the dead carcasses that were cast into this garbage dump, and to the perpetual fire kept to consume them.

How apt then for Christ to use this word to denote the final extinction of the wicked. They will be obliterated as though they had never been.

Psa. 1:4 : *“The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.”*

Mal. 4:1 : *“...all that do wickedly shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”*

Psa 37:20 : *“But the wicked shall perish; and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.”*

A helpful exercise would be to look up “hell” and “hell-fire” in the concordance, and colour-code all the places where it comes from “Gehenna”.

Then, wherever you see “hell” in your Bible, read “grave”; and wherever you see “hell” or “hell-fire” coloured to denote it’s from “Gehenna”, read “garbage dump”!

As the Bible teaches that death is an unconscious sleep, there is no need to invent some place for dead people to continue to exist; nor to bring forward the day of judgment to the day of one’s death instead of the Bible teaching that it will be at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The distinction between the righteous and the unrighteous at the day of judgment will be the difference between everlasting joy and everlasting death.