

# Bible Studies

## What is hell like?

The subject of Hell is neither popular nor pleasant, but the Bible considers Hell a sobering reality. The object of this study is to discover what the Bible says about hell. Hell is the destination of those who's names are not in the Lamb's book of life *Rev 21:27*, ie those who have not made a commitment to Jesus and been 'saved'. John calls it *the Second Death, Rev 2:11*. Luke, the Abyss, *Luke 8v31*.



### Read Matthew 25v41

#### Who was hell made for?

#### Does this mean people do not go there?

It appears that God did not make hell for mankind but for the fallen heavenly beings. The reason for this is clear; *The Lord ... is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9*. This is spelled out time and again, God has gone to exceptional lengths to keep people out of hell, *John 3v16*. He has done everything short of force them.

Heaven is God's gift, but hell is earned. *Romans 6v23*.

Jesus concludes the parable of the Sheep and the Goats by saying "*Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.*" *Matthew 25:46*

#### Did you notice three descriptions of Hell from Matthew 25?

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#### An overwhelming description

*Matthew 5v22*

*Mark 9v47-48*

*Hebrews 10v27*

*Revelation 20v14-15*

*James 3v6*

*Jude v7*

#### What is it?

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In Mark 9v47 & Matthew 18v9, the word for Hell is *Gehenna* the Greek name for the Hinnon Valley. Where the ashes of the sacrifices and temple rubbish were thrown, here fires burned day and night, giving a *type* or illustration, of hell. cf Isaiah 66v24 Revelations *Lake of fire*, is in stark contrast to it's description of heaven as a *Sea of Glass*, like crystal, *Rev 4v6*.



#### Another description

*Matthew 25v30,*

*Matthew 8v11, 22v13, 24v5*

*Jude v13*

*Jude v6*

*2 Peter 2v4*

*2 Peter 2v17*

#### What is it?

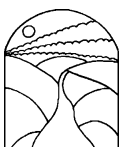
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#### How literally should these descriptions be taken?

#### Considering these descriptions would you say hell is a state or a place?

C.S.Lewis wrote of the austerity of hell.

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Heaven is prepared for those who have been made righteous, to know yourself a sinner and that the time for forgiveness is passed, would make heaven very uncomfortable.



## The rich man and Lazarus

Read **Luke 16v19-31**

We have to be careful that we do not read too much into a parable, Jesus is not teaching about the afterlife, on the other hand it is inconceivable that Jesus would mislead us. It must also be noted that this description of the afterlife is prior to Judgement (for the rich man's brothers are still alive).

**What is Jesus point in this parable?**

**What does this parable tell us about Hell?**

**What does it tell us about a person in Hell?**



## Who's in charge?

*Revelation 20v10*

*Revelation 20v14-15*

*Matthew 10v28*      *Luke 12v5*

The Bible uses hell as both the regime of evil and the destiny of the wicked, we should not confuse the two. While Satan is in charge of the forces of evil, he will not be in charge of Hell. He will be an inmate not the governor.

**What does this do to the idea of hell as fun?**

People think of hell as a place where anything goes, where anything is allowed, where there will be a reunion with old friends.

**In light of the scriptures we have read is this an accurate view of hell?**

The OT frequently refers to '*Sheol*', sometimes this means no more than '*the grave*', but often it refers to an '*intermediate state*', a place of remand, prior to final judgement. This explains the Revelation 20v14, where death and Hades (Sheol) are thrown into the fire (hell).

Just as the NT talks of reward in heaven, so it indicates degrees of punishment in Hell. "But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you." Matthew 11:24



## Summary

Hell is:-

<i>Separation from God</i>	<i>2 Thessalonians 1v9</i>
<i>Exclusion from Heaven</i>	<i>Revelation 21v8</i>
<i>Removal from His blessing</i>	<i>Isaiah 38v18</i>
<i>Extreme suffering</i>	<i>Revelation 20v10</i>
<i>Memory and remorse</i>	<i>Luke 16v19-31</i>
<i>Unsatisfied desire</i>	<i>Luke 16v24</i>
<i>Sorrow and Loss</i>	<i>Matthew 24v5</i>
<i>Shame and eternal contempt</i>	<i>Daniel 12v2</i>
<i>Unpleasant company</i>	<i>Revelation 21v8</i>
<i>Hopelessness</i>	<i>Proverbs 11v7</i>

There are three views of hell that the Scripture clearly rules out, **Universalism**, that because God is love He will subject no one to hell; **Restorationism**, that hell is temporary to purify sinners for entry to heaven; **Second Probationism**, that there is a second chance to be saved between death and judgement.

We may not like the idea of Hell, but we must remember that God is totally just and amazingly loving, and will do nothing that is not 100% right. We do not need to fear that God will do anything unjust. We do need to recognise the seriousness of rejecting/failing to accept Christ.

# Bible Studies

## What is Heaven like?

People seem to have an abiding view of heaven as cold marble floors and harps. A Sunday morning worship service that goes on for ever.



### Heaven is where God lives.

Jesus taught us to pray, *Our Father in Heaven*. It is where His lordship is supreme, again we pray, *Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*.

When the Father spoke, He spoke from Heaven, *Matthew 3v17*. When Jesus prayed he lifted His eye to heaven, *Mark 6v41, 7v34*. Jesus came from heaven, *John 3v31, 6v38, 1 Cor 15v49*. He ascended to heaven, *Luke 9v51, Acts 1v2*, and will return from there, *Acts 1v11, 3v21, 1 Thes 1v10, 4v16*. There are many OT references to Heaven as God's dwelling and of God acting from heaven. The idea of heaven as the abode of God is so strong that most of the time the Gospels use heaven, to mean God. eg *Matthew 21:25* Heaven is God's Throne, *Matthew 5v34, 23v22, Isaiah 66v1*



### Heaven is above

The Bible always talks of heaven using words like **above, up, ascend**.

Heaven is not physically located above the earth, it is not part of the universe as we know it. It is on a different plain. It is spiritually above. Some people claim that the use of above is misleading and indicates a believe in a three tired universe, but what other language could be used? In contrast to Jewish writers of the NT do not try to give a geography of heaven or divide heaven into realms, the only exception is *2 Cor 12:2*. The Hebrew and Greek words for heaven sometimes mean sky.

### What does the NT say about heaven.

#### Prepared

*In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. John 14:2-3*

#### What does this passage tell us about heaven?

The word rooms (Gk. Mone) means abodes, staying places, it is the same word used in *v23 will come to him and make our home with him*.

*Mat 25v34 & Heb 11v16* also speak of heaven as prepared for us.

#### Citizens

*Philipians 3v20*

*Hebrews 11v13-16*

#### What implication does Citizen of Heaven - Alien on Earth have?

#### What is heaven described as?

Hebrews uses the word Heavenly to differentiate what is real and eternal from what is temporary, a shadow. Heaven is the reality compared with earths transience.

#### With the Lord

Each of these verse tell us that heaven is to be with the Lord, but each one also tells us something extra.

*2 Corinthians 5v8*

*Philipians 1v23*

*1 Thessalonians 4v17*

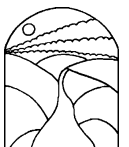
#### We shall also be like Him

*1 John 3v2 2 Corinthians 5v1-4*

*1 Corinthians 15v49, 53-54*

#### In what ways will we change?

STREAMS IN THE DESERT



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## Reward

*Matthew 6:20*

*1 Peter 1v2*

*Matthew 5:12*

*1 Corinthians 9v25*

**Rewards for what? What do you think the rewards will be?**

## Service and rest

*Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them." Revelation 14:13*

*Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Revelation 7:15 of 22v3*

## Fullness of Knowledge

*Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. 1 Corinthians 13:12*

## Made perfect

*Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,*

## Rejoicing

*I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. Luke 15:7*

## Purity and Light

*The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. Revelation 21:23*

*Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Revelation 21:27*

*But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13*

Just imagine no sin to mar God creation. A place ruled by God's Love & Righteousness

## Read

**Revelation 4**

**Revelation 21v1-5, 9-18, 22-27**

**Revelation 22v1-5**



## What do these passages tell us about heaven?

There is a story of a girl born blind, who was given sight by a ground breaking operation. When the bandages came off she could see for the first time, staring out of the window, at the trees and grass, she exclaimed, "mummy why didn't you tell me it was beautiful." How can you explain such beauty to someone born blind? The Apostle John in Revelation struggled with just this problem.

We can learn a lot about heaven from this world and from ourselves. The God who made this earth also made heaven. This world is corrupted by the consequences of the fall and man's sin and yet it is world is full of diversity and beauty. Within in it we can find challenge, fulfilment and satisfaction.

## If this is so then what will heaven be like?

To quote Keith Green, "this is living in a garbage can compared to what's going on up there"

## Will heaven be boring?

Imagine the thing you most enjoy doing. God created pleasure, work and satisfaction. He did not create the drudgery and frustration that so often mark our lives. Heaven will be full of pleasure and activity. One thing I am convinced of, is that heaven is not the end. It is the beginning.