

“The Essentials Of Our Faith”

Session XLI

August 28, 2011

“The Ultimate Issues Of Life: ‘Heaven’ Or ‘Hell’?”

Part Two: “Hell” – The Eternal Destiny Of The Unbeliever!

Introduction:

“That hideous doctrine of Hell is fading . . . the doctrine no longer gets its float in the Church parade; it has become a museum piece at best, stored in the shadows of a far corner. . . . The reality of Hell, however, demands we haul the monstrous thing out again and study it until it changes us. Ugly, garish, and familiar as it is, this doctrine will indeed have a daily, practical, and personal effect on every Believer who comes to terms with its force.”

--John Thomas

“Ludicrous” or “Logical”?

The Biblical doctrine about Hell is often seen as “ludicrous” by the modern mind. It is “amusing or laughable; absurdity or incongruity; exaggeration or eccentricity; that which merits scorn.” (Webster’s Dictionary) The philosophically, theologically, and socially “knowledgeable” person who has no Biblical base, usually disregards this belief as out-dated nonsense!

Yet, for the Bible believing Christian, the reality of Hell is a theological and philosophical necessity. It is necessitated by the revelation of God’s character. He is “light” as opposed to “darkness”; He is “truth” as opposed to “deception”; He is “just” as opposed to “unjust”; He is “righteous” as opposed to “sinful”; He is “life” as opposed to “death”! God’s punishment for unbelief is “logically” consistent with His character of holiness and righteousness. No unredeemed creation may come into His presence!

“In the program of God there are several judgments yet in the future. It is not accurate to speak of one great ‘Judgment Day’ to come for these future judgments will occur at different times.”

--Charles Ryrie

Note: The Bible teaches that every human being will appear at one of these future judgments!

Seven Future Judgments

We will appear for divine judgment by the supernatural process of “resurrection” from the dead or by the “rapture” of the living body!

--The “resurrection of life” or “the first resurrection”, Lk. 14:13-14; Jn. 5:28-29.

- a. The dead and living “saints” of this Church Age, I Thess. 4:16.
(resurrected or raptured at the Rapture of the Church)
- b. The dead “saints” of the Old Testament times, Daniel 12:2.
(resurrected at the end of the Tribulation period, at Christ’s Second Coming)
- c. The martyrs of the Tribulation period, Rev. 20:4.
(resurrected at the end of the Tribulation period, at Christ’s Second Coming)

--The “resurrection of condemnation” or “the second resurrection”, Jn. 5:29.

The unredeemed dead of all time – the “Great White Throne”, Rev. 20:11-14.
(resurrected at the end of the Millennial Kingdom)

I. The Judgment of the Believer’s Works:

- a. Scripture: I Cor. 3:10-15; II Cor. 5:10.
- b. Time: Immediately after the “Rapture” of the Church.
- c. Place: Heaven (while the Tribulation period is taking place on earth).
- d. Focus: The Believer’s “works” will be examined to distinguish worthy works from worthless works.
- e. Outcome: Reward or loss of reward!

Note: Salvation is not in question – eternal life has already been given!
(Only Believers appear at this judgment)

II. The Judgment of the Old Testament Saints:

- a. Scripture: Daniel 12:1-3; Isa. 26:19.
- b. Time: End of the Tribulation period; at the Second Coming of Christ.
- c. Place: Unknown.
- d. Focus: The saints of the O.T. are resurrected and judged based upon personal “faith” in the promises of God made to the Nation of Israel.
- e. Outcome: The gift of eternal life as part of the Nation of Israel.

III. The Judgment of the Saints of the Tribulation Period:

- a. Scripture: Revelation 20:4-6.
- b. Time: End of the Tribulation period; at the Second Coming of Christ.
- c. Place: Unknown.
- d. Focus: The resurrected ‘martyrs’ of the Tribulation are judged based upon their opposition to Antichrist and his program.
- e. Outcome: The gift of eternal life and the honor or “judging” in the Millennial Age.

IV. The Judgment of the Jewish Survivors of the Tribulation:

- a. Scripture: Ezekiel 20:34-38; Matthew 25:1-30.
- b. Time: End of the Tribulation period; at the Second coming of Christ.
- c. Place: The "Wilderness".
- d. Focus: The surviving Israelites will be "regathered" to Israel from the ends of the earth. Christ will cause them to "pass under the rod", Lev. 27:32, to purge out the rebels (unsaved) so that only "believing" Jews enter the Millennium.
- e. Outcome: These believing Jews will not be given resurrection bodies at this time, but will go into the Kingdom in their earthly bodies and produce children.

V. The Judgment of the Gentile Survivors of the Tribulation:

- a. Scripture: Matthew 25:31-46; Joel 3:2.
- b. Time: End of the Tribulation period; at the Second coming of Christ.
- c. Place: The "Valley of Jehoshaphat" (meaning "Yahweh judges")
- d. Focus: The surviving Gentiles of the Tribulation will be judged for their treatment of the nation Israel during that period. Kindness to the Jew brought death.
- e. Outcome: These believing Gentiles will enter the Kingdom, also in their earthly bodies and produce children. The unbelieving Gentiles will not be allowed into the Millennial Kingdom, but will be cast into the Lake of Fire.

VI. The Judgment of Satan and the Fallen Angels:

- a. Scripture: Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10; Jude 6-7.
- b. Time: End of the Millennium.
- c. Place: Unknown.
- d. Focus: Satan and his angelic followers receive their final judgment for rebellion against God.
- e. Outcome: Satan and the fallen angels are cast into the Lake of Fire forever!

VII. The Judgment of the Unsaved Dead – The Great White Throne:

- a. Scripture: John 5:22, 27, 29; Revelation 20:11-15.
- b. Time: End of the Millennium.
- c. Place: The "Great White Throne".
- d. Focus: Unbelievers of all the ages will be raised and judged for personal rejection of God and His offer of redemption through the work of Jesus Christ.
- e. Outcome: Everyone who appears in this judgment will be cast into the Lake of Fire.
"This judgment will not separate Believers from unbelievers, for all who will experience it will have made the choice during their lifetimes to reject God. The 'Book of Life' which will be opened at the Great White Throne judgment will not contain the name of anyone who will be in that judgment. The books of works which will also be opened will prove that all who are being judged deserve eternal condemnation . . ." --Charles Ryrie

A Biblical Description Of “Hell”

A. In the Old Testament:

--Hebrew Word: “**sheol**”.

The word refers to “*the place of departed spirits*” where:

- a. Activity and knowledge “cease”, Psa. 88:3-4; Eccles. 9:5,10.
- b. A place of “conscious sorrow”, II Sam. 22:6-7; Psa. 9:17; 18:5-6; 116:3.

B. In the New Testament:

--The Greek Words:

- a. “**Geh enna**” = “a name which speaks of human sacrifice and suffering”;
- b. “**Hades**” = “the place of departed spirits”;
- c. “**Tartaros**” = “the lowest abyss and to the spirits confined there”, II Pet. 2:4.

--The English Words:

- a. “**Perdition**” = “utter loss and ruin”;
- b. “**Damnation**” = “judgment or condemnation”;
- c. “**Torment**” = “physical pain”;
- d. “**Second Death**” or “**Lake of Fire**” or “**Everlasting Fire or Punishment**”

*“The new life which the Believer has received is **47** times said to be ‘eternal’ or ‘everlasting’ . . . **7** times this word, ‘eternal’, is used in connection with the destiny of the wicked (Matt. 18:8; 25:41,46; Mk. 3:29; II Thess. 1:9; Heb. 6:2; Jude 7).”*

--Lewis Sperry Chafer

Practical Applications Of The Doctrine Of “Hell”

1. Hell is a place of “_____”!

--Speaking of the Rich Man who died, Jesus describes his condition:

“In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment . . . have mercy on me . . . send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.” (Luke 16:23, 24)

- a. There will be “_____”! (Luke 13:28)
- b. There will be “_____”! (Matt. 13:42)

“While weeping attracts our sympathy, wailing frightens and offends us. It is the pitiable bawl of a soul seeking escape, hurt beyond repair, eternally damaged. A wail is sound gone grotesque because of conclusions we can’t live with.”

--John Thomas

- c. There will be “_____ of _____”! (Luke 13:28)

2. Hell is a place of “_____”! (Matt. 8:12)

“On earth we take for granted two physical properties that help keep us physically, mentally, and emotionally stable. The first is light; the second is solid, fixed surfaces. Oddly, these two dependables will not accommodate those in Hell.”

--John Thomas

3. Hell is a “ _____ ”! (Rev. 20:1,2 – “abyss”)

“ . . . the new occupant is slow to learn. In growing panic, he kicks his feet and waves his arms. He stretches and he lunges. But he finds nothing. After more feverish tries, he pauses from exhaustion, suspended in black. Suddenly, with a scream he kicks, twists, and lunges until he is again too exhausted to move. He hangs there, alone with his pain. Unable to touch a solid object or see a solitary thing, he begins to weep.” --J. Thomas

4. Hell is a place of “ _____ ”!

*“As time passes, he begins to do what the Rich Man did – he begins to start to **think**. . . . Of course, he thinks, **Jesus, the God of love, can get me out of this**. He cries out with a surge, “Jesus! Jesus! You were right! Help me! Get me out of this! He waits, breathing hard with desperation. The sound of his voice slips into the darkness and is lost. He tries again, ‘I believe, Jesus! I believe now! Save me from this!’ Again the darkness smothers his words. Our sinner is not unique. **Everyone in Hell believes!**” --John Thomas*

5. Hell is a place of “ _____ ”!

*“When he wearies of appeals, he does next what anyone would do – assesses his situation and attempts to adapt. But then it hits him – **this is forever!** Jesus made it very clear. He used the same words for ‘forever’ to describe both Heaven and Hell. ‘**Forever**’ he thinks, and his mind labors through the blackness until he aches. ‘**Forever!**’ he whispers in wonder. The idea deepens, widens, and towers over him. The awful truth spreads before him like endless, overlapping slats: When I put in 10,000 centuries of time here, I will not have accomplished one thing. I will not have one second less to spend here.” --J. Thomas*

6. Hell is a place of “ _____ ”! (Rev. 14:11)

*“As the Rich Man pleaded for one drop of water, so, too, our new occupant entertains a similar ambition. In life he learned that even bad things could be tolerated if one could find temporary relief. Perhaps even Hell, if one could rest from time to time, would be more tolerable. He learns, though, that ‘the smoke of (his) torment goes up forever and ever; and (he has) **no rest** day and night. **No rest day and night – think of that!**’ --J. Thomas*

Conclusion

“Men are pleased to receive the Bible revelation concerning Heaven, but do not heed its warning regarding Hell. Human sentiment, opinion, and reason are valueless concerning these eternal issues. It is wisdom to heed the voice of the Son of God, and He more than any other has stressed the woes of the lost (Matt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mk. 9:43,45,47; Lk. 12:5). If eternal punishment cannot be comprehended, it should be remembered that infinite holiness and the sin by which infinite holiness is outraged are equally unmeasurable by the human mind. God is not revealed as One who causes good people to suffer in Hell; but He is revealed as One who at infinite cost has wrought (worked skillfully) to the end that sinners, believing in Christ, may not perish, but have everlasting life.” --Lewis Sperry Chafer