

**SPECIAL
ANNOUNCEMENT**

THE BIBLICAL TEACHING ON **HELL**

The fact of hell

Although there are those who dismiss the possibility of any such future place as hell, the Bible allows no such debate. Jesus Christ Himself repeatedly spoke of hell in the starkest terms and warned of its reality. He even referred to degrees of punishment in hell (Mark 12:40).

It is interesting to note that Scripture suggests that hell as a place of future torment was never designed for mankind, but for "the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

The fact of hell serves as the basis for the Christian's compelling concern to proclaim the good news of the Gospel to an unbelieving world.

The description of hell

Three words are translated "hell" in the New Testament. One is used only once and then in connection with "the angels that sinned" (2 Peter 2:4), and refers to the limits of their area of existence. Of the other two, **hades** is invariably connected with death (as the absence of life) and corruption from which resurrection is the only exit (Rev. 20:5). The third, **gehenna** is identified as the place of future torment for all under judgement (Luke 16:28) and is described by such sobering terms as: "everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:41); "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:44); "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8); a "bottomless pit" (Rev. 9:2); "outer darkness" and a place of "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:12); "fire unquenchable" (Luke 3:17); "a furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:42); "the blackness of darkness" (Jude 13); and where "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day or night" (Rev. 14:11).

The horror of hell

While the Bible promises the believer wonderful fellowship in heaven, it suggests that hell is a place where there is no intelligent contact with others consigned there. In the chilling passage in the Epistle of Jude certain men are condemned for denying the Lord Jesus Christ and it is declared that for them "the blackness of darkness has been reserved forever" (Jude 13; see also 2 Peter 2:17 and Matt. 8:12, 22:13, 25:30).

Since God is Light (1 John 1:5), meaning absolute light, it follows that in His absence there is absolute darkness (Jer. 13:16) in which there would be no possibility of association with others. The suggestion, therefore, is that among its many chilling features, hell is a place of . . .

TOTAL DARKNESS

and thus by implication

TOTAL SEPARATION from all others

where the condemned will have

TOTAL RECALL of every detail

of his or her life

NOTE: The Bible teaches that only God can forget (Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:12, 10:17). Since the believer in heaven will have been transformed into His likeness (Phil. 3:21; 1st John 3:2), it follows that among the indescribable joys of heaven is the fact that not only will our sins be forgotten by God, but we also will have had them erased from our own minds and consciences forever.

On the other hand, science implies that every experience of a person's life is printed indelibly upon that person's being and is subject to recall in complete and precise detail. Hypnosis tends to corroborate this whereby an individual can be induced to recall in great detail verifiable incidents from earliest childhood.

This strongly suggests that one of the most horrifying aspects of hell is that those so consigned will relive over and over again without end every experience of life lived in separation from and rejection of the saving grace of God . . . including the many times when, face to face with the righteousness of a loving God, they turned away in willful rejection.

In light of the above, the following words of the Apostle Paul take on special urgency for all who have trusted in Jesus Christ as personal Savior. . .

"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord,
we persuade men"

2nd Corinthians 5:11