

THE FOUR HELLS

- **TARTARUS** – For certain angels who sinned
- **HADES** – The abode of the unsaved dead now
- **THE ABYSS** – The Bottomless Pit; a home for demons
- **LAKE OF FIRE** – Everlasting hell

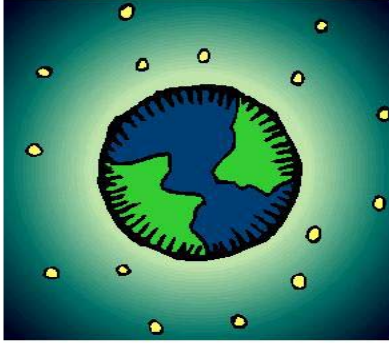


THE FOUR HELLS

Heaven or hell? Eternal bliss; eternal damnation. The ultimate good; the ultimate terror. The dye is set, each of us will eventually make our way to one or the other of these two destinations. Heaven or hell. Oh yeah! Oh no! The question begs to be asked, where will you spend eternity?

DIMENSIONS OF SPACE AND EARTH

1. **THE THIRD HEAVEN:
GOD'S DWELLING PLACE**
2. **THE SECOND HEAVEN:
OUTER SPACE**
3. **THE FIRST HEAVEN:
EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE**
4. **THE PHYSICAL EARTH:
THE LAND AND THE SEAS**
5. **THE AREAS UNDER THE EARTH:
TARTARUS, HADES, THE ABYSS,
HELL**



Tonight I want to share a short teaching on hell – actually the four hells.

As you can see, I have here a chart on the “Dimensions of Space and Earth.” This evening, we are going to look at “The Areas Under the Earth”. While these areas include the seas, the grave, and other like places. The

primary thought is hell. Not just hell, though, but the four regions of hell. As I go over these four regions, I want you to think of these four hells as being a prison. In fact, 1 Peter 3:19 actually uses the term “prison” to describe hell. Just as men put rebellious people into prison, so God shall imprison those who rebel against Him.

I want you to take special note of how these four regions describes a different section or cell block or compartment in the prison of hell.

TARTARUS

Genesis 6:1-7, **“When men began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years.”**

The Nephilim were on the earth in those days--and also afterward--when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the LORD said, “I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth--men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air--for I am grieved that I have made them.”

Jude 6-7, **“And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home--these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.”**

2 Peter 2:4, **“For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment....”**

One thought here is, the sons of God has alluded to in Genesis 6 actually refers to fall angels who came down to earth and cohabited with the daughters of men – human beings. As such, they had sexual relations with these women and thus produced offspring. These offspring became giants or tyrants.

It was these terrible hybrid people/fallen angels that brought about such evil on the earth. Evil that eventually led to the great flood of Noah's day.

These fallen angels are thought to possibly be the ones who were sentenced to the “**gloomy dungeon**” prison called Tartarus to be held in “**everlasting chains**” until judgment.

This hell, I want to point out, is not described as a place of fire or of weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Rather it is called a “gloomy dungeon.” It is a prison.

HADES

The second hell is the place where the unsaved go when they die. It is an intermediate state or holding tank. At the end of the world, those who are in Hades will be taken out of Hades and cast into the lake of fire.

It is not a purgatory, for once in hell the person is always in hell. There is no praying him or her out, buying him or her out, or any other way out. It is simply a compartment of hell. As such, understand, it is still called hell.

Think of the story of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus found in Luke 16. Listen to verses 22-31, **“The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, (Hades) where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'**

“But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

“He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

“Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' ” ‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ ” He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

The rich man was in the fires of Hades.

Jesus warned, **“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Hades)” Matthew 10:28.**

THE ABYSS -- THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

This is the place where certain demons and evil spirits are kept until the end of the world and the time of judgment. This is the third compartment of hell.

The Antichrist will come up out of the Abyss as will numerous demons during the Great Tribulation.

Notice these two verses, Revelation 11:7, **“Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them.”**

And Revelation 17:8, **“The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been**

written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come.”

Satan will be bound and cast alive into this pit and he will stay put for 1,000 years. Notice Revelation 20:1-3, **“And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended.”**

As with Hades, this too is a temporary place. The evils ones, regardless of who or what they are, each have a date with the Great White Throne Judgment and then the everlasting lake of fire – eternal hell. Eventually, the abyss will be cast into hell.

THE LAKE OF FIRE

Jesus, in Matthew 5:22 notes, **“Anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell (the lake of fire).”** The term that the Lord used for hell was Gehenna. The locals were well acquainted with Gehenna. The city landfill just outside of Jerusalem was called Gehenna. It was truly a place where the maggots thrived and the fires never died. When He used the word Gehenna, He used a term that drew from his listeners a sense of total horror and disgust. Yes, the Jews knew exactly what the Lord was saying when He spoke of the fires of Gehenna!

Gehenna is the place where all those who have rebelled against God are to be cast at the end of the world — at the final judgment. All unbelieving men and women, fallen angels, demons, and the devil will be sentenced to this awful place. This is the final hell to which all the wicked shall be judged and condemned.

When people talk about hell, this is usually the hell that they are thinking of and alluding to.

By the way, Jesus, in Matthew 25:46, used the phrase **“eternal punishment.”** In the same verse, He noted that the righteous have **“eternal life.”** The point is, the same Greek word for eternal is used in both places. The punishment of the wicked will last as long as the blessings of redeemed—forever!!! The options are clear: eternal life in heaven or eternal death in hell.

September 21, 1989, is a day that no resident of Charleston, South Carolina, will ever forget. On that terrible day the fury of Hurricane Hugo was unleashed on that beautiful city. The wind gusts hit 135 miles per hour which forever altered the landscape of the place. An elderly Charleston couple had weathered the storms of 1945, 1954, 1959, 1960, and 1979. Therefore, when officials pleaded for people to leave the city and seek shelter inland, they dismissed these frantic alarmists as uninformed but well-meaning hurricane novices. They stayed and yes they did survive the storm. Yet, according to their own accounts, during the height of Hugo, they hugged the floor in the hallway of their house crying out to God for mercy.

This story reminds me of the words of the Apostle John who said that on the great Day of Judgment, people will **“Call to the mountains and the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!’”** On Judgment Day people will plead for mercy, but it will be too late. For, you see, in hell, any hope for a second chance will be past -- forever past!

In the moments before Hugo hit the coast, the final message issued by a television anchorman was, “You have been warned to flee from the city and now the responsibility for your inaction lies with you.” So it is that a storm many times worse than Hugo is about to hit. Throughout this evening’s discussion, you have been warned to flee from the wrath to come. Now the responsibility for any inaction lies with you.

I like this statement copied it from *The Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible*: “All the bodies of dead unbelievers who are in the earth or scattered over the earth shall be resurrected. God knows where

every atom and particle of dust is, every element that makes up every unbeliever's body. Therefore, when He calls forth for all unbelievers to stand before Him in judgment, all the bodies of dead unbelievers that lie over the dry land of the earth—they shall all come forth. They shall come out of the great pyramids of Egypt, the jungles of Africa, the rain forests of Brazil, the desert sands of Arabia, the burial grounds of Indians, the battlefields of wars, the alleys and secret places of murder, and the graves of America. Every place upon earth where a human body has fallen or been placed, that body is going to arise. God is going to call forth the atoms or whatever the basic element of human life is; He is going to call those elements together, and the body of the unsaved person is going to stand before the great white throne judgment of God."

NOTICE NOW HOW THESE VARIOUS HELLS ARE LISTED SEPARATELY in Revelation 20:1-3, 10-15, "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

¹⁰And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

The abyss, Hades, and the lake of fire. Three separate places; three separate hells. In the end, though, the lake of fire will engulf them all.

THE PASSAGE I JUST READ ALSO ALLUDES TO DEATH BEING CAST INTO HELL.

1 Corinthians 15:26 points out that "The last enemy to be destroyed is death." Eventually, death is going to die! To put it another way, death is going down – literally! Death itself is going to end up in hell.

- Death took Jesus.
- Death took the lives of each of the apostles.
- Death took Abraham, Moses, and David.
- Death took Mary and Martha in the Bible.
- Death took my dad and numerous other friends and loved ones.
- No doubt, most of you could say the same thing.

Nonetheless, death will not have the last word.

Listen to 1 Corinthians 15:51-55 from *The New Living Translation*, "But let me tell you a wonderful secret God has revealed to us. Not all of us will die, but we will all be transformed. It will happen in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, the Christians who have died will be raised with transformed bodies. And then we who are living will be transformed so that we will never die. For our perishable earthly bodies must be transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die.

When this happens—when our perishable earthly bodies have been transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die—then at last the Scriptures will come true:

'Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?"

The apostle is almost jeering death. He does so within the context that death is itself a defeated foe. It's days are numbered and the clock is ticking.

I want to close with teaching with this simple thought. The next time someone tells you to go to hell, ask them which one? When they ask you what you mean, take the opportunity to tell them about the four hells. More than likely, they will need the teaching more than you.