

# Defending Doctrinal Distinctives: Eternal Conscious Punishment

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## Hell (~40 total verses)

Deut 32:22	Matthew 13:41-42	Matthew 18:8	2 Peter 2:4,9
Isaiah 66:22-24	Matthew 18:8	Matthew 25:41	Jude 6-7
Daniel 12:2	Matthew 25:41	Matthew 25:46	Revelation 14:9-11
Matthew 3:12	Matthew 25:46	Mark 9:47-48	Revelation 20:10-15
Matthew 5:22	Mark 9:47-48	Luke 16:19,31	Revelation 21:6-8
Matthew 8:12	Matthew 10:28	2 Thess 1:8,9	
Matthew 10:28	Matthew 13:41-42	Hebrews 6:2	

## Question #1

Do sinners continue to sin in hell?

## Revelation 16:9,11,21

9 And the people were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, **and they did not repent so as to give Him glory** .

11 and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pain and their sores; **and they did not repent of their deeds** .

21 And huge hailstones, weighing about a talent each, \*came down from heaven upon people; **and people blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail,** because the hailstone plague \*was extremely severe.

## Revelation 22:11, 14-15

11 Let the one who **does wrong, still do wrong** ; and the one who is **filthy, still be filthy**; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy.”

14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. 15 Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.

## Question #2

How should we view hell properly, particularly knowing that God is perfect, holy, and good?

How can we avoid downplaying or apologizing for an attribute of God that we struggle with?

# Hell is a natural consequence of ..

- **God's Holiness**
  - "Hell is as unending as God is holy"
- **God's Worthiness**
  - "If hell were finite, God's worthiness would also be finite"
- **God's Justice**
  - "Hell is NOT full of good people, but wicked people"

## Question #3

Won't proclaiming the unpopular message about hell prevent people from believing? Shouldn't we just preach about God's love instead?

## Matthew 10:28

28 Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather **fear Him** who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

## 2 Corinthians 5:10 -11

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

11 Therefore, **knowing the fear of the Lord,** we persuade men ...

## Question #4

What are the best arguments for Annihilationism and why do we not believe them?

## Best Annihilationist Arguments (1/3)

1. Annihilation is more alignment with God's "love nature" - ECT seems disproportionate and cruel

*This is an argument from emotion and from not fully understanding the holiness of God and the sinfulness of sin*

## Best Annihilationist Arguments (2/3)

2. The bible uses the words "destruction" and "death" to describe hell

*These words have a range of meaning and must be intercepted from context. Does not necessarily mean cessation of consciousness!*

## 2 Thessalonians 1:9

9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

## Revelation 20:14,10

14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

## Best Annihilationist Arguments (3/3)

3. God says he will "reconcile all things to himself" and sin and death is defeated, but if hell is eternal there will never be an end to death and sin.

*1. People in hell are still brought under subjection and bow the knee, and sin is conquered in judgement!*

*2. The fact that angels undergo ECT is not controversial and ruins the argument*

## Question #5

What is soul sleep and does the Bible teach it?

## Conscious Intermediate State

- "Today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43)
- "Absent from the body ... at home with the Lord" (2 Cor 5:6-8)
- Martyrs under the Throne (Rev 6:9 -11)
- Transfiguration (Matthew 17:30)

## Question #6

Will people in heaven be conscious of people in hell? If so, how could there be no crying and weeping for people in heaven if we saw our loved ones in hell?

## Awareness of People Suffering in Hell

- Lazarus was aware of the Rich Man (Luke 16:19 -31)
- Martyrs under the Throne were aware of injustice on earth and crying out for judgement (Rev 6:9 -11)
- Lost are tormented in the presence of the angels (Revelation 14:10)
- Response of multitudes in heaven to judgement is joy (Rev 19:1-3)

## Question #7

I sometimes like to think of hell as having different levels like a prison where the worse offenders are thrown in the darkest area but the ones who were misled or never heard about Jesus are thrown in a roomier place. What does scripture say about that?

# Degrees of Punishment

Luke 12:47-48

And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes, 48 but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. **From everyone who has been given much, much will be required;** and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

# Degrees of Punishment

Matthew 11:20 –22

20 Then He began to reprimand the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. 21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that occurred in you had occurred in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22

Nevertheless I say to you, **it will be more tolerable** for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you.

# Degrees of Punishment

Hebrews 11:29

**29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve** who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

# Degrees of Punishment

James 3:1

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur **a stricter judgment.**

# Degrees of Punishment

Revelation 20:13

And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them; and they were judged, each one of them according to their deeds .

## Question #8

Why so many words for hell — Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Tartarus, Lake of Fire? Are these different places?

# Different Words for Hell/Afterlife

- Sheol
  - 65x in Hebrew OT
  - "realm of the dead", "the grave"
  - Both the righteous and wicked go there
  - ... but generally to be avoided
  - Translated "grave" "pit" "Sheol" "hell"

# Different Words for Hell/Afterlife

- Hades
  - 10x in NT
  - Septuagint translation of Sheol
  - Rich man was in torment there (Luke 16:23)
  - ...but Lazarus is also probably there!
  - 2 compartments!
  - Hades gives up its dead and itself thrown into lake of fire, so temporary (Revelation 20:13 - 14)

# Different Words for Hell/Afterlife

- **Gehenna**
  - 12x in NT, used by Jesus
  - **Picture: Valley of Hinnom**
  - **Looks a lot more like hell**
    - **Mark 9:48 "hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched."**
  - **Lake of fire, final state**

# Different Words for Hell/Afterlife

- **Lake of Fire**
  - **Primarily in Revelation**
  - **Same as Gehenna**
  - **Beast, False Prophet, Satan tormented day and night forever (Rev 20:10)**
  - **Death and Hades were thrown in with all whose names are not in the book of life. (Rev 20:14 -15)**

# Different Words for Hell/Afterlife

- **Tartarus**
  - **1x, 2 Peter 2:4**
    - **For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;**
  - **Holding place for a particular group of fallen angels awaiting final judgment, not a destination for humans.**

# Different Words for Hell/Afterlife

- **The Abyss / Bottomless Pit (abussos)**
  - **9x**
  - **Demons beg not to be sent there (Luke 8:31)**
  - **Locust -demons emerge and where Satan is bound during the millennium. (Rev 9:1 -11)**
  - **A holding place primarily for demonic powers**

1 Cor 5:11 · NASB

Therefore, knowing the fear of  
the Lord, we persuade men...