

# Heaven & Hell

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## Hell & the Unbeliever

### Its Reality

People push the subject of eternal punishment in hell out of their lives. Satan wants to bring sinners there, and will do what he can to bring them there, and will not hesitate to use lies and deceit to convince people there is no hell, or that we are automatically going to heaven. But God's word says more about the wrath of God than about the love of God. Christ speaks more of hell than heaven. And we do well to listen to His word (Isaiah 33:14; Psalm 11:6).

1. Hell is a real place. People speak of hell as the dark side of life; this is not true. Hell is a real place created by God (Lk. 16:28).
2. Hell has real torments. It is a place of punishment. God is holy and just and sin against Him must be punished. The greater the guilt, the greater the penalty (Lk 12:47-48; Matt. 11:20-24)
3. Hell has real inhabitants. The devil and his angels are there (Rev. 20:10). The terribly wicked go there (Rev. 21:8). But also those who do not obey the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:8).

### Its Agony

1. Absolute Poverty. Hell means separation from God (Matt. 25:41). The rich fool thought he had great riches, but after death he would be very poor (Luke 12:20; 16:25)
2. Agonizing Pain. It is described as a place of fire (Rev. 21:8; Matt. 25:41; Luke 16:24). Where the worm does not die (Mark 9:46). This may be a reference to the undying worm of their conscience which will gnaw at them. John Flavel: "Conscience which should have been the sinner's curb on earth, becomes the whip that must lash his soul in hell."
3. Angry Presence. Hell is not a place where God is absent (Rev. 14:10). He is present but in His anger (Heb. 10:31; 12:29; Nah. 1:6).
4. Appalling Prospect. It will never end (Matt. 18:8; 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:10)

Jonathan Edwards: Consider what it is to suffer extreme torment for ever and ever; and to suffer it day and night, from one year to another, from one age to another, and from one thousand ages to another, and so adding age to age, and thousands to thousands, in pain, in wailing and lamenting, groaning and shrieking, and gnashing your teeth, with your souls full of dreadful grief and amazement, your bodies full of racking torture, without any possibility of getting ease; without any possibility of moving God to pity by your cries; without any possibility of diverting your thoughts from your pain. Consider how dreadful despair will be in such torment; to know assuredly that you never, never shall be delivered from them; to have no hope: when you shall wish that you might be turned into nothing but shall have no hope of it... when you would rejoice, if you might but have any relief, after you have endured these torments millions of ages, but shall have no hope of it. After you shall have worn out the age of the sun, moon and stars... without rest day and night, or one minute's ease, yet you shall have no hope of ever being delivered; after you shall have

worn a thousand more such ages you shall have no hope... but that still there are the same groans, the same shrieks, the same doleful cries, incessantly to be made by you, and that the smoke of your torment shall still ascend up for ever and ever.

The more the damned in hell think of the eternity of their torments, the more amazing will it appear to them; and alas! They will not be able to keep it out of their minds. Their tortures will not divert them from it, but will fix their attention to it. O how dreadful will eternity appear to them after they shall have been thinking on it for ages together, and shall have so long an experience of their torments! The damned in hell will have two infinities perpetually to amaze them and swallow them up; one is an infinite God, whose wrath they will bear and in whom they will behold their perfect and irreconcilable enemy. The other is the infinite duration of their torment.

### **Its Urgency**

We must heed the call to “flee the wrath to come” (Matt. 3:7). Whereto? Hebrews 6:18: who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.