

Hard Sayings Of Jesus

Lesson 12

If hell is real, can you honestly rejoice in the victory, love, and wisdom of God, knowing that somewhere in His beautiful creation there will always be a hell crammed full of tortured souls who have no chance for relief or forgiveness--or even death?

I. This Week's Hard Saying

Matt 10:28 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. KJV

II. Why This Is Hard

- a. This is a hard saying because to the human mind the concept of the soul and body being eternally destroyed in a place of torment is **incomprehensible** and goes against human notions of God's love, mercy, forgiveness, etc.

III. Historical Development of "Hell"

- a. The ancient Hebrew texts of Genesis, 1 Kings, Psalms, and Job, suggest that all the dead--both righteous and wicked--were dispatched to a gloomy underworld realm called *sheol*, meaning **insatiable**. Prov 30:15-16 15 The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough: 16 The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough. KJV
- b. It is viewed as a **morally** neutral place akin to the *hades* of Greek mythology. Gen 37:35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him. KJV
- c. By the second century B.C., when the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into **Greek**, *hades* replaced *sheol* in the Greek Bible, and the two concepts became firmly melded in popular thinking.
- d. When belief in a final resurrection of the dead emerged among the Pharisees and in Christianity, *hades* became a **temporary abode** of the souls of the wicked only--the righteous went to heaven to await the bodily resurrection. Acts 23:8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both. KJV
- e. Jesus referred to gehenna because it was well known to his hearers as a place where trash fires burned **incessantly** and where ancient human sacrifices had been offered to Canaanite gods.
- f. The early Church believed that, post judgment, the wicked will be condemned to a **hell-fire** like *gehenna*, the Valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem.
- g. In English version Bibles, the **distinctions** between the terms are destroyed, because all three terms--*sheol*, *hades*, and *gehenna*--are simply translated as "hell." Hades is used 10 times :- Gehenna is used 12 times :- Tartaros is used once.
- h. Many of the early church fathers, including the fourth-century Latin theologian Jerome, assumed that hell was a place of **sensory torment**. "We should indeed mourn for the dead," Jerome wrote, "but only for him whom Gehenna receives . . . and for whose punishment the eternal fire burns."
- i. Within the first 500 years of the Church, Origen of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa, opposed the notion of eternal torment and instead thought hell was more a place of **spiritual suffering**--of remorse and separation from God.
- j. Origen suggested that in hell, even the worst of sinners could be rehabilitated and ultimately find their way to paradise. But his "**universalist**" view was rejected by church leaders at the Council of Constantinople in 543.
- k. Augustine staked out a middle ground by suggesting that suffering in hell was **both** spiritual and sensory--a view that continues to hold considerable sway among modern commentators.
- l. While a few theologians of the day believed that sinners ultimately would be **annihilated**, most held the belief that the torments of hell were unending.
- m. Luther and Calvin regarded hell as a real place, but they believed its fiery torments were figurative. Hell's worst agonies, they said, were the terror and utter despair of spending eternity **cut off from God**.
- n. The rise of **liberal** Protestantism in the 19th and early 20th centuries spawned renewed objections to the thought of eternal retribution in a material hell.
- o. The 20th century was nearly the **death of hell**. Theological discourse on the subject at the nation's seminaries and Christian colleges has almost evaporated.

IV. Examining the Hard Saying in Context

Hard Sayings Of Jesus

Lesson 12

- a. Matthew Chapter 10 is an **ordination** sermon, which our Lord Jesus preached, as He prepared his twelve Disciples for the ministry of apostleship.
- b. They were given **instructions** concerning: their preaching; their working miracles; to whom they must go; how they must behave themselves; and a warning to those who would not hear them. v. 5-15.
- c. They are also told what they should suffer, and from whom; counsel is given them as to what course to take when persecuted, and they were encouraged to bear up cheerfully under their **sufferings** v. 16-42.
- d. The overall message of the passage leads the Disciples to conclude that there is much trouble and anguish ahead about which they could reasonably become **fearful**.
- e. This, Jesus tells them is the **opposite reaction** that they should have to His message. Don't fear men or the devil, fear God and all will be well with your souls. Fearlessness is the ultimate proof of faith in the face of circumstance.
- f. This passage is decisive proof that there is a hell for the body **as well as** the soul in the eternal world.
- g. The body and the soul are separate and distinct principles. The soul is **immaterial**. The body may be slain and the soul escapes; therefore, murderers of the body are not able to injure the soul.

VI. Point of Contention: God or Satan Who Destroys?

- a. The lives of Christians are under the care of divine Providence. Satan cannot determine the destiny of a human soul because they **belong to God**. Ezek 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. KJV
- b. Believers are never commanded to fear Satan but to **resist him**. James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. KJV 1 Peter 5:8-9 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world KJV
- c. Satan can not destroy men in hell because he himself is **punished** there. Rev 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. KJV

VII. How Bad Could It Be?

- a. Many modern expositors support the notion that hell is not a 'place' but a 'state,' a person's **'state of being,'** in which a person suffers from the deprivation of God.
- b. Still others see hell as a place but see the descriptions of it as **figurative** while a third group sees it as a literal place with literal fire where the worm dieth not.
- c. Since Jesus talked more about hell than He did about heaven and the language he used to describe it depicts it as a place of horrific and interminable suffering, we can be assured that the suffering is **real**.
- d. The word translated destroy (apollumi), doesn't mean **annihilate** but is rendered ruined, perished or lost. Mt. 9:17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish [apollumi]: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved
- e. Therefore, the wine bottles that **perished** would still be in existence, but ruined for the purpose for which they were intended.
- f. The **prodigal** was not annihilated when he was *lost*, but was fully conscious in his spiritual state. Luke 15:24 "For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost [apollumi] and is found."
- g. Furthermore, if one was annihilated in *geenna* one could **not** experience "torment" **forever and ever**, as clearly expressed in Rev. 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. KJV

VIII. Application

Today, while 71 percent of Americans believe Hell exists, just 5 people out of 1000 expect it to be their final destination.

- a. What does that suggest to you?
- b. If hell is real and eternal what does that mean to you?
- c. How should it affect your life?

Hard Sayings Of Jesus

Lesson 12

I. This Week's Hard Saying

Matt 10:28 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. KJV

II. Why This Is Hard

- a. This is a hard saying because to the human mind the concept of the soul and body being eternally destroyed in a place of torment is _____ and goes against human notions of God's love, mercy, forgiveness, etc.

III. Historical Development of "Hell"

- a. The ancient Hebrew texts of Genesis, 1 Kings, Psalms, and Job, suggest that all the dead—both righteous and wicked—were dispatched to a gloomy underworld realm called *sheol*, meaning _____. Prov 30:15-16
- b. It is viewed as a _____ neutral place akin to the *hades* of Greek mythology. Gen 37:35
- c. By the second century B.C., when the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into _____, *hades* replaced *sheol* in the Greek Bible, and the two concepts became firmly melded in popular thinking.
- d. When belief in a final resurrection of the dead emerged among the Pharisees and in Christianity, *hades* became a _____ of the souls of the wicked only—the righteous went to heaven to await the bodily resurrection. Acts 23:8
- e. Jesus referred to gehenna because it was well known to his hearers as a place where trash fires burned _____ and where ancient human sacrifices had been offered to Canaanite gods.
- f. The early Church believed that, post judgment, the wicked will be condemned to a _____ like *gehenna*, the Valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem.
- g. In English version Bibles, the _____ between the terms are destroyed, because all three terms—*sheol*, *hades*, and *gehenna*—are simply translated as "hell." Hades is used 10 times :- Gehenna is used 12 times :- Tartaros is used once.
- h. Many of the early church fathers, including the fourth-century Latin theologian Jerome, assumed that hell was a place of _____.
- i. Within the first 500 years of the Church, Origen of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa, opposed the notion of eternal torment and instead thought hell was more a place of _____—of remorse and separation from God.
- j. Origen suggested that in hell, even the worst of sinners could be rehabilitated and ultimately find their way to paradise. But his " _____ " view was rejected by church leaders at the Council of Constantinople in 543.
- k. Augustine staked out a middle ground by suggesting that suffering in hell was _____ spiritual and sensory—a view that continues to hold considerable sway among modern commentators.
- l. While a few theologians of the day believed that sinners ultimately would be _____ most held the belief that the torments of hell were unending.
- m. Luther and Calvin regarded hell as a real place, but they believed its fiery torments were figurative. Hell's worst agonies, they said, were the terror and utter despair of spending eternity _____.
- n. The rise of _____ Protestantism in the 19th and early 20th centuries spawned renewed objections to the thought of eternal retribution in a material hell.
- o. The 20th century was nearly the _____. Theological discourse on the subject at the nation's seminaries and Christian colleges has almost evaporated.

IV. Examining the Hard Saying in Context

- a. Matthew Chapter 10 is an _____ sermon, which our Lord Jesus preached, as He prepared his twelve Disciples for the ministry of apostleship.
- b. They were given _____ concerning: their preaching; their working miracles; to whom they must go; how they must behave themselves; and a warning to those who would not hear them. v. 5-15.
- c. They are also told what they should suffer, and from whom; counsel is given them as to what course to take when persecuted, and they were encouraged to bear up cheerfully under their _____ v. 16-42.
- d. The overall message of the passage leads the Disciples to conclude that there is much trouble and anguish ahead about which they could reasonably become _____

Hard Sayings Of Jesus

Lesson 12

- e. This, Jesus tells them is the _____ that they should have to His message. Don't fear men or the devil, fear God and all will be well with your souls. Fearlessness is the ultimate proof of faith in the face of circumstance.
- f. This passage is decisive proof that there is a hell for the body _____ the soul in the eternal world.
- g. The body and the soul are separate and distinct principles. The soul is _____. The body may be slain and the soul escapes; therefore, murderers of the body are not able to injure the soul.

V. Point of Contention: God or Satan Who Destroys?

- a. The lives of Christians are under the care of divine Providence. Satan cannot determine the destiny of a human soul because they _____. Ezek 18:4
- b. Believers are never commanded to fear Satan but to _____. James 4:7 7; 1 Peter 5:8-9
- c. Satan can not destroy men in hell because he himself is _____ there. Rev 20:10

VI. How Bad Could It Be?

- a. Many modern expositors support the notion that hell is not a 'place' but a 'state,' a person's _____ in which a person suffers from the deprivation of God.
- b. Still others see hell as a place but see the descriptions of it as _____ while a third group sees it as a literal place with literal fire where the worm dieth not.
- c. Since Jesus talked more about hell than He did about heaven and the language he used to describe it depicts it as a place of horrific and interminable suffering, we can be assured that the suffering is _____
- d. The word translated destroy (apollumi), doesn't mean _____ but is rendered ruined, perished or lost. Mt. 9:17
- e. Therefore, the wine bottles that _____ would still be in existence, but ruined for the purpose for which they were intended.
- f. The _____ was not annihilated when he was *lost*, but was fully conscious in his spiritual state. Luke 15:24
- g. Furthermore, if one was annihilated in *geenna* one could **not** experience "torment" _____, as clearly expressed in Rev. 20:10

VII. Application

Today, while 71 percent of Americans believe Hell exists, just 5 people out of 1000 expect it to be their final destination.

- a. What does that suggest to you?
- b. If hell is real and eternal what does that mean to you?
- c. How should it affect your life?