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# True Christianity

## Book 3:

# Hell

An in Depth Study Revealing Something Very Different to What Many Think

Please also see other free books in this series on totally different subjects.

They contain:

▶ The suppressed Gospel that the mainstream churches do not teach which appears vital for your salvation. Very few know this information.

▶ The Bible says that it will be similar in our time to the days of Noah and Lot (Luke 17:26). Almost everyone was wrong then therefore the majority are deceived today.

▶ Therefore it is important to search for the truth and not accept everything the mainstream Church says because your salvation could depend on it.

▶ Deceptions and Conspiracies we need to know about but few are aware of.

## Introduction

People often only focus on one or two verses, and accept what man has taught them instead of what is in the Bible. They don't study the whole picture with an open mind and use logic. As a result they pass on biased one-sided doctrine, which causes divisions amongst believers and causes people to turn away from God. **If we want to believe in something controversial we must study both sides of the argument, and do thorough research.** Also, we need to think about what we study and see what is logical. This is especially important if one wants to teach the subject. Otherwise they can do damage. In this chapter I have one example that I have researched before. This subject troubled me because people taught me the opposite of what strong evidence suggests. It may be important for people to read this evidence as it could stop them believing or teaching false doctrine and turning people off God. I thought it is important to place this side of the story in this chapter, as many people have not heard it. People have a right to hear things from different angles. This may increase people's love for God and cause them to realize that God is more loving than they have been taught. The best way to avoid deception is to have an open mind.

The purpose of this report is to reduce divisions, as many people cause them by teaching that Hell is definitely eternal torture and that it is definitely worse than earth for all people who go there. This is a side issue, which can be

distracting like many other doubtful doctrines. It is insignificant compared to the other important doctrines on my site, which resume in the next chapter. I therefore don't encourage people to get involved with this chapter. It is probably best to leave issues like this alone when the Bible is not clear on them. We certainly should not teach doctrines are likely if they are not in the Bible. At one stage I wrote information on this subject and did not upload it, however, I felt being prompted again and again to include it. If I did not put this information on my sites some people may assume that I am suggesting God is creating almost all people to be subtly deceived and to be eternally tortured, as there may be a similar percentage saved today as in Noah's time. If people get this impression it would indicate an unfair, cruel, unloving God, which would turn people away from Christianity. If people did not teach the eternal torture theory, which gives this impression, I would not include this chapter.

### Hell Misinterpreted in Scripture

The Bible is not at all clear on the severity or the length of the torment in Hell. Many Bible verses indicate that Hell is not eternal torture, and none state that there is eternal torture. If eternal torture were true it would mean that we are to discard some Bible verses. This is forbidden, as all scripture is given by the inspiration of God (2 Tim 3:16, Rev 22:18,19). The Bible also does not say that Hell will be worse than earth is for all people who

*awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Job 14:12 - So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."*

In 1 Samuel 28 Saul used a lady with a familiar spirit to wake Samuel from sleep, as he was dead. Samuel said to Saul that he would be with him. *"1 Samuel 28:19 ... tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me..."* Therefore Samuel and Saul were going to be in the same place. At this stage before the resurrection they both would be in Sheol and would not be separated into a places of paradise and suffering.

### Conclusion

Perhaps God is not making this subject very clear so that people who do not carefully study the Bible will not become complacent. A father will strongly warn his Children, but not normally take action in the cruelest way his words could be interpreted. He loves his children and wants to frighten them into doing what he commands.

It is important not to get tied to this issue because it will take your time away from the important things to learn and teach. However, it is important to keep an open mind and not believe or teach doubtful or false doctrine.

References :

- 1 <http://www.c-webdesign.com/churchofgod/Truth%20about%20HELL.htm>
- 2 <http://www.truechristianity.com/philosophy> with reference to <http://www.wordonly.com/CITitle.html>

Quote: (Reference 2) *"The Bible clearly says that nonbelievers will not suffer throughout eternity. I have written a book on this subject and the whole thing is on my website: Title Page: God is not Sadistic! Nonbelievers will rise to face judgment, will suffer then cease to exist. I would love to have long discussion on the subject. We can show anything in the Bible we want if we only look at a few verses and ignore the rest of the Bible. However, we must analyze all Scripture. **Preaching everlasting torment turns people away from God, instead of scaring them into believing. It also causes unnecessary grief to Christians. We must show the fairness of God who offers the choice of life or death. We must make our beliefs conform to the Bible. Instead, people have been brainwashed into believing that the soul is eternal and they twist the Scripture to conform to that assumption. This totally contradicts the Bible. I look forward to long discussion on this subject with anyone willing to rigorously study what the Bible has to say on the Subject."*** End quote (2).

In the below verse of the King James, the word "are" is added and is a **translation error**. It does not appear in the Greek. *"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."*

The below verse indicates that unbelievers will be **denied life as a punishment**. *"John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting*

*life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."* Even if God maintained the wrath forever it does not mean torture. You can remain angry at something or your wrath could remain about something that has been annihilated or dead. God may still be angry at Sodom and Gomorrha. Death does not necessarily mean annihilation. It means the ceasing of life. 1 Corinthians 15: 53, 54 refer to how the believers will change from being mortal to immortal. They will have eternal life. This is not talking about the fate of unbelievers.

### Soul Sleep

**Both unbelievers and believers souls will sleep unconsciously in Sheol or Hades before they are resurrected and judged.** Many more verses indicate this than are listed below. In Acts 7:60 Stephen fell asleep when he died. Also, consider these verses. *"John 11:11 - These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 1 Thessalonians 4:13 - But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, ... 15 ... the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep."*

The wicked also slept in Sheol or Hades. *"1 Kings 15:1-3 - ... Abijam ... walked in all the sins of his father ... 1 Kings 15:8 - And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him ... Daniel 12:2 - And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall*

do not make it to Heaven.

Hell could well be much worse for every unbeliever, so we must fear the fact that God could send us there and respond by doing His will. We must warn others with concern for their souls. There will be a period of torment before eternal death for unbelievers.

In Jude 1:7, **Sodom and Gomorrha were examples of the suffering of the vengeance of eternal fire**. This would have to mean that they would be **completely destroyed and never rebuilt**. Generally cities are rebuilt after destruction but these cities were not rebuilt and never will be. The cities are not on fire today but the effects of the fire are eternal. *"Jude 1:7 - Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."*

In like manner the term **everlasting punishment or everlasting destruction would mean the effects of the punishment or the destruction for unbelievers are complete and eternal**. They will be denied life with no chance of ever gaining life again. **Eternal shame and death is an everlasting punishment**. If God's word is consistent with Jude 1:7, it does not mean that people will be tortured for eternity or even burn for eternity. "An example" is something that is obvious to everyone and it was obvious to everyone that the fire went out. Everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46) could mean eternal death, which is eternal separation from God and

punishment.

**The word "ever" does not always mean eternity. It can mean eon or a long period of time, or age lasting in the concordance.** When the age is eternal or the subject is immortal it means eternity. However, there are cases in the Bible where it meant a period during a person's life until they died. In Exodus 21:2 a slave was to serve his master for ever. Jonah was in the fishes belly for ever. *"Jonah 2:6 - I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God."* **Only the Beast, the False Prophet and Satan are said to be tormented forever and ever** (Rev 20:10). It does not say this about all the people who are not saved.

In Ecclesiastes 9 it states: *"Verse 4 - For the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing, And they have no more reward, For the memory of them is forgotten. 5 For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. 6 Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun. 10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."*

Generally if someone states something in error in the Bible it is rebuked and corrected by either God or a man lead by God at a later time. This

verse is not rebuked by anyone, therefore why should people say it is wrong. Jesus talked about the wisdom of Solomon (Matthew 12:42, Luke 11:31).

### Three meanings for Hell

In the Hebrew and Greek, **words that mean three different things are translated into the English word Hell. One is the grave**, the Greek word Hades or the Hebrew word Sheol. As explained later both Christians and non-Christians sleep there until the resurrection. *"Psalm 16:10 - For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (Sheol); neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."* This indicates that David will be in Sheol for a period of time.

In some cases Sheol refers to being close to death when persons are overcome with sorrow. In Jonah 2:2, Jonah felt pain when he was close to death. He was a man of God. In Sheol where suffering of the soul is referred to, it is not for after death, apart from maybe when the wicked are resurrected. In Genesis 37:35 when Jacob thought that Joseph was dead he said: *"For I will go down into the grave (Sheol) unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him."*

The second Hell is **Tartaros. It is a restraining place for demons** until the day of judgment. It is translated to Hell in 2 Peter 2:4. The Bible does **not** say this place is **for people**.

The **third Hell is Gehenna. It is a historical place that is a valley near Jerusalem** which was a garbage dump

where **bodies were burnt** (Jeremiah 7:31-8:3, 19:1-13). *"Mark 9:43 ... the fire that never shall be quenched:"* **The fire was not quenched or deliberately put out, but it did go eventually go out by itself** just like the fire that was not quenched in Jerusalem in Jeremiah 52:13.

### Worms in Hell

It is **likely that Gehenna near Jerusalem will be the future Hell of fire. Maggots or worms lived on corpses and did not die before hatching into flies**. See Isaiah 66:24 and Mark 9:43-48. Literal worms fed on the wicked. *"Job 24:20 - The womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him; he shall be no more remembered; and wickedness shall be broken as a tree. Acts 12:23 ... he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."*

Quote: (Reference 1) *"Smith's Bible Dictionary gives a description of this valley. If anything, especially a dead body, landed on a ledge above the fires, it would be devoured by many worms or maggots that were kept alive by the animal and vegetable substances deposited there."*

*It was to **these worms that Christ was referring when he said, "Their worm dieth not."** (Mark 9:43-48).* End Quote (1).

### Different Punishments for Different People

The Bible speaks of many different groups of which some are severely

different churches and religions. Also, they may not be saved because they never heard the gospel, or sought God without finding him and then became angry with God when their prayers were not answered.

Often weak people are subtly deceived by the Devil. They are unintentionally doing the wrong thing. If they are honest, caring people, why should they be eternally tortured? The Bible indicates in several places that the Devil has deceived the majority, so the mainstream is wrong. They are following the doctrines of man and not the doctrines of God. They are twisting the Scriptures. Heaven may not be enjoyable if you knew your relations and friends were being tortured for eternity. If a friend or family member is suffering, often we may feel pain ourselves.

**It does not seem right for a loving God to keep creating people when it is almost certain that they will be deceived and tortured for eternity.** If torture was eternal, why would God want us to have children anyway, and wouldn't it be best for a baby to die so that it can have peace instead of eternal torture when it grows up? God is supposed to be a positive God who hates evil. It is more positive to say that people are created for an opportunity to have eternal life, instead of saying God is creating almost everyone for eternal torture.

If there is eternal torture wouldn't the Bible say both servants in Luke 12:47-48 are beaten for eternity? Instead they have a limited number of lashings.

Doesn't teaching that eternal torture is certain attack the loving nature of Christ and makes Him appear to be a cruel monster? It could be considered as evil doctrine in God's sight. I feel closer and more loving to God when believing that He is a fair God than I did while believing he was an unfair one. Isn't this what God wants?

The information at [truechristianity.com/christian/saved.htm](http://truechristianity.com/christian/saved.htm) gives very strong evidence and many Scriptures indicating that a very **small number** of people alive today are **born again**. Perhaps, there may only be about 8 people, which was the number saved in Noah's time. The Bible indicates that when Jesus returns it will be similar to the days of Noah as explained on the above page. If this is so it will indicate that a lot of committed people seeking God will not be chosen. This could include you and I and everybody we know. It does not seem right that a loving God would want to eternally torture people who did good things, sought God and tried to do his will.

### Quotes and Translation Errors

I have had a question on my forum for a while asking: "Do you believe that all unbelievers burn in hell and are tormented forever?" Obviously some people say eternal torture is true. But others write to me and give strong evidence against it. They say it turns people off God instead of causing them to believe. Therefore, the theory can do harm. Below is an extract that someone wrote on my forum.

and not necessarily the period of time the wicked will suffer. Smoke can rise for a very long time after a fire has ceased. Babylon's smoke will rise forever and ever but Babylon will also be found no more according to the below two verses. "Revelation 19:3 - And again they said, Alleluia And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. Revelation 18:21 - And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."

### **A New Beginning**

Revelation 21:1 - And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be **no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain:** for the former things are passed away. 1 Corinthians 15:26 - The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." If unbelievers were still conscious and spiritually dead there would still be death. "Isaiah 25:8 - He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it. Isaiah 41:11 - Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. 12 Thou shalt

seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee **shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.** 2 Peter 2:12 - But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;" The time of perishing and the final end for the wicked is the second death. It is most likely that the above verse is referring to this. The wicked are compared to beasts. This is most likely suggesting that consciousness ends for the wicked as it does for beasts. "Ezekiel 28:17 - Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. 18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. 19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more."

### **Unfair to Eternally Torture Subtly Deceived Souls**

God is a loving God of mercy, yet many people may go to Hell when it is not fully their fault. For example, people may have been confused, not accepting the Bible due to the number of different interpretations, arguments,

punished, while others do not have their punishment stated. Punishment for one group does not mean all unbelievers suffer this punishment. For example, Rev 14: 9-11 is only referring to those who worship the Beast and his image.

### **Eternal Death is Not Eternal Torture**

**God repeatedly offered people a choice of eternal life or death.** The Bible often speaks of death after varying degrees of punishment for unbelievers, which is the opposite of eternal life (Romans 6:23, Rev 2:11, Rev 20:14, James 5: 20). **Eternal torture would also have to be eternal life,** as you have to be alive to feel pain. Where does the Bible say unbelievers have eternal life? Death and darkness indicate the opposite.

People will feel **torment for a period of time, as did the rich man who did not help Lazarus, (Luke 16:23-26) but this time could be very short for some who narrowly missed out on the Kingdom of Heaven.** We don't know what those who narrowly miss out on going to Heaven will feel. These verses in Luke 16 certainly do not say that Hell is eternal torture. All we know is the rich man is in torment for a period of time. If it is literal it most likely refers to the anguish and pain upon the resurrection to judgment in which the rich man would not realize he had been asleep for thousands of years and that his brothers had died. It could also be a near death experience or the sorrows of Sheol (Psalm 116:3 and explained earlier). This near death

experience could be much worse for unbelievers. There is also evidence that Luke 16 is a parable. What supports this possibility is that the rich man would want more than just a drip of water for his tongue and that Heaven would be misery if it's occupants could see their loved ones suffering on the other side of the gulf. Also, the rich man answers to Abraham, which contradicts 1 Timothy 2:5. Apart from some exceptions, no humans are in Heaven yet as the resurrection has not yet occurred. The exceptions are Eliza (2 Kings 2:11) and maybe Moses which is described in Matthew 17:1-8, Jude 9 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Also, Enoch (Gen 5:24) could be another possibility.

Some people also say that all people are eternal beings, but where does the Bible say that, and if that was so, where were you when God created the world, and what could you remember then? God is eternal not man. God created man in his own image but not to be eternal like God. If we were also eternal we would be like God. Some modern Bible translations, which are not word for word translations, have a bias towards the immortal soul for unbelievers. **No Scriptures say that dead souls are conscious or that the unbeliever's soul is immortal.** "Ezekiel 18:4 ... the soul that sinneth, it shall die. James 5:20 - Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Quote: (Reference 1) "Notice that God offered Adam and Eve life on the one hand, and death on the other.

Adam and Eve would not have been offered LIFE if they already were immortal souls. Man was created mortal and in need of eternal life from God through his Spirit. In the garden of Eden, he told man the way that would lead to eternal life. Then he told man that going the wrong way - the way of selfishness and greed - would lead to DEATH (Gen. 2:17). But Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44), told the woman, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4). "You have an immortal soul." Man has been believing that lie about the immortal soul ever since!" End Quote (1).

Many people wrongfully think Daniel 12:2 refers to eternal torture. Daniel 12:2 - *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* At <http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=contempt> contempt means "The feeling or attitude of regarding someone or something as inferior, base, or worthless; scorn. The state of being despised or dishonored; disgrace. Open disrespect or willful disobedience of the authority of a court of law or legislative body." This does not mean torture. Their names will be a shame forever even though they have been annihilated.

### Eternal Torture Doctrine From Pagan Philosophers

**Pagan philosophers had an influence on the church.**

Quote: (Reference 1) "Plato was a

pagan Greek philosopher, born in Athens, 427 B.C., a student of Socrates. He wrote the famous book *Phaedo*, on the immortality of the soul, and this book is the real origin of the modern belief in the immortality of the soul.

The *Encyclopedia Americana* states further: "The main features of hell as conceived by Hindu, Persian, Egyptian, Grecian and Christian theologians are essentially the same. The Western religious leaders from Roman times through the Middle Ages borrowed the **doctrine of eternal torture from the pagan philosophers**. Certain writers of the Middle Ages had such tremendous influence on the Christian-professing world, that their writings and teachings came to be generally accepted and believed, until it became the doctrine of the Christian-professing world. Among these influential writers were Augustine and Dante Alighieri."; End Quote (1).

### Destruction and Annihilation

The Bible often uses the word destroy and destruction when referring to souls. In Matt 13:30 and Matt 7:19, destruction is compared to annihilation of branches and tares. Some **verses indicating complete destruction or annihilation** are: "Psalm 146:4 - His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Psalm 112:10 - The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish. Psalm 104:35 - Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let **the wicked be no more**. Bless

thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD. Psalm 37:20 - But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away. Mal 4:1 - For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. Mal 4:3 - And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do [this], saith the LORD of hosts. Matthew 10:28 - . . . fear him which is able to DESTROY both soul and body in Hell [GEHENNA]. Psalm 73:18 - Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. 19 How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. Psalm 9:5 - Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever. 6 O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them. Obadiah 1:16 - For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

Under Moses' Law, people were punished with the equivalent of what they had done. (Exodus 21:24-30, Leviticus 24:20-21, Deuteronomy

19:21). Humans can't give anyone everlasting torment, so under this law no one should receive everlasting torment. We are to treat each other better than the law (Matthew 5:38-39).

The below two verses say the punishment will be an everlasting destruction and separation from the Lord. "2 Thessalonians 1:8 - In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from (abo - of separation) the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;"

However, the below verse indicates the punishment is in the presence of the Lamb. If souls were tormented for eternity, the above verses would contradict the below ones. The only explanation is that they are tormented in the presence of the lamb and then they are destroyed in the second death and are separated from God where there is no torment. Torment is in the presence of God. This will change when they are removed from God's presence. "Rev 14:10 - The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

Those who worship the Beast and his Image will be tormented, and then the smoke of their torment will rise forever and ever (Rev 14: 9 - 11). It must also be noted that this verse is talking about the **duration of smoke**