

# The destiny of the dead (I)

## The wicked

### Text: Matthew 23:33

*“Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?” (Gehenna)*

“Hades” – The realm of the departed souls:

The Hadean realm has often been interpreted as the place where all the souls of men would suffer and consequently the term “Hell” has been applied to it. But in reality the proper definition of Hades is simply that it is the abode of the departed souls, without reference to their spiritual character i.e. whether they were “good” or “wicked” It is simply the receptacle of all the departed souls.

There are two other terms translated “Hell” in the old KJV and they are different Greek words:

“Gehenna” is the actual place where the wicked will have everlasting torment heaped upon his head (Revelation 14:11) “And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name”

“Tartarus” is the place where the fallen angels are reserved under chains until the day of judgment. (2 Peter 2:4) “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment”

Does the New Testament maintain this distinction between “Hades” and “Gehenna”?

### Discussion:

**HADES** – “The unseen world”

- Matthew 11:23 – Indicates it as a place, the opposite of heaven-ward
- Matthew 16:18 – Indicates it as a place having the power to prevent the dead (except Jesus) from leaving its realm
- Luke 10:15 – Indicates it as a place, the opposite of heaven-ward
- Luke 16:23 – Indicates it as a place where uncharitable people suffer torment
- Acts 2:27 – Indicates it as a place in which Jesus was not abandoned
- Acts 2:31 – Indicates it as a place in which Jesus was not abandoned
- Revelation 1:18 – Indicates it as a place of which Jesus has the keys
- Revelation 6:8 – Indicates it as a place which follows “Death”
- Revelation 20:13 – Indicates it as a place which released its captives for the judgment day
- Revelation 20:14 – Indicates it as a place that will finally be vanquished in the lake of fire

**GEHENNA** – “Valley of suffering”

- Matthew 5:22 – A place for those in whose eyes their brothers are demeaned (“hell fire”)
- Matthew 5:29 – A place to be avoided even at the cost of losing body parts whilst on earth.

- Matthew 10:28 – A place in which body and soul can be destroyed
- Matthew 18:9 – A place to be avoided even at the cost of losing body parts whilst on earth (“Eternal fire” / “Fiery hell”)
- Matthew 23:15 – A place to which proselytes of the scribes and Pharisees will be twice likely to be consigned
- Matthew 23:33 – A place indicating the improbability of the scribes and Pharisees escaping condemnation
- Mark 9:43 – A place to be avoided even at the cost of losing body parts whilst on earth (“Unquenchable fire of hell”)
- Mark 9:45 – A place to be avoided even at the cost of losing body parts whilst on earth
- Mark 9:47 – A place to be avoided even at the cost of losing body parts whilst on earth
- Luke 12:5 – A place indicating the extent of the One whose power all men should fear
- James 3:6 – A place from whose evil the misuse of the tongue is generated.

#### SOME DESCRIPTIVE TERMS FOR HELL:

- “The hell of fire” – Matthew 5:22
- “Eternal fire” – Matthew 18:8
- “Unquenchable fire” – Mark 9:43
- “The lake of fire” – Revelation 20:14–15
- “Fire and brimstone” – Revelation 14:10

#### ALSO DESCRIBED AS:

- “Blackness of darkness” – 2 Peter 2:17
- “Outer darkness” – Matthew 8:12
- “Separation from God” – 2 Thessalonians 1:9

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### Conclusion:

Hell (Gehenna) is revealed by God as a reality and having been prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41) which even the demons tried to avoid as much and as long as possible (Matthew 8:29)

Considering then the enormity of the pain and suffering that will be inflicted on those beings, it is therefore not surprising that God does not want any human to perish (along with them) but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9)

But regardless of how well Jesus revealed the damnation of hell fire would be like, there will still be people who willingly will and does choose to go there, simply because they do not believe the word of the Spirit of truth. (John 16:8–11)

Some inherit eternal damnation simply because of willful procrastination in dealing with the things God has made known to man, how to escape the wrath of God (Acts 24:25;)

Romans 1:18

*“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth”*

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## Questions:

Why is hell necessary?

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According to the following Scriptures, who will be consigned to hell?

Matthew 25:41

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Matthew 7:13-14

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2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

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Revelation 21:8

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Matthew 25:31-46

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Revelation 20:15

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What do the following texts reveal about the punishment of the wicked?

1. Romans 2:5, 8-9, 12

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2. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

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3. Hebrews 10:28-31

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4. Jude 1:7, 13

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5. Revelation 14:10-11

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6. Revelation 21:8

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