

# THE TRUTH ABOUT HELL

---

## The Word Hell

Hell is a word that is found 54 times in the King James Version of the Bible. Many churches believe that hell is a place of torturous suffering in literal unquenchable fire where the unsaved and wicked go after they die, remaining there forever, with no hope of release. Others believe that hell is a place where the unsaved and wicked go after death and will experience eternal separation from God. Most believe that *saved* Christians go directly to heaven at their death. Others believe all will be saved, if not now, then in the future Kingdom of God, whose King will be the Lord Jesus Christ.

Catholics added an interim place where most Catholics go to have their sins purged before they can reach heaven. This place, called *Purgatory*, is also a place of suffering, but only temporary. They believe *sainted* Catholics alone go directly to heaven when they die.

Non-Christian religions have their own teachings of what happens after death, such as being reincarnated into another form or being, and many other concepts too numerous to consider in this booklet.

Let us now consider what the Bible says on our subject. First, we need to understand what God said is the penalty for sin. In Gen. 2:16 we read, *"And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.'"* God said clearly, the penalty for sin was **death**! If there was to be such a place of eternal suffering or separation, God would have clearly spoken it to Adam. It would be grossly unjust of God not to tell them about it at the time He gave them His warning. Since God is completely just and righteous, this point must be strongly considered for the proper understanding of our topic.

The penalty for sin is simply that life ceases, which is death. Adam and Eve, after they sinned, eventually died - they ceased to exist. This death penalty was then passed on to all their posterity, as Romans 5:12 clearly states: *"... just as sin entered the world through one man (Adam), and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all have sinned."* Job had a true understanding of the brevity of life and what follows. In Job 14:1-2 he said, *"Man, born of woman, is of few days and full of trouble. He springs up like a flower and withers away; like a fleeting shadow, he does not endure."* But Job also believed that there would be a *resurrection of the dead in God's due time*. Job 14:10-14 says, *"But man dies and is laid low; he breathes his last and is no more. As water disappears from the sea or a riverbed becomes parched and dry, so man lies down and does not rise; till the heavens are no more, men will not awake or be roused from their sleep. If only you would hide me in the grave and conceal me till your anger has passed! If only you would set me a time and then remember me! If a man dies, will he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait for my renewal to come."*

The Book of Ecclesiastes offers us more enlightenment about the condition of the dead. Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10: *"For the living know that they will die, but **the dead know nothing**; they have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten ....Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for **in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working, nor planning, nor knowledge, nor***

**wisdom.**" Clearly, we are told death is the cessation of life, and those who die rest in their graves until the resurrection.

Since the body ceases to live at death, is there such a thing as a separate *immortal soul* which lives on? This doctrine of the immortality of the soul is a prominent teaching of most Christian churches and many non-Christian religions. Yet this term is not found in the Scriptures.

In Matthew 10:28 Jesus says to His disciples, "*Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can **destroy both soul and body in hell.***" Note that Jesus states clearly that the soul *can be* destroyed by God, and since this is the case, it cannot be immortal. The body and the soul cease to exist or live at death when it enters the grave. Ezekiel 18:20 says clearly, "*The soul who sins shall die.*"

Let us go to the first mention of the word *soul* in the Bible. In Genesis 2:7 we read, "*And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man **became** a living soul.*" Since Adam *became* a living soul when God breathed into him the breath of life, it is logical to conclude that when that breath of life is withdrawn, the person becomes a *dead soul*.

### Hell in the Old Testament

Let us now consider the word *hell* in the Old Testament. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and uses the word *sheol*. In the King James Version *sheol* is translated *grave* - 31 times, *hell* - 31 times, and *pit* - 3 times. *Translations are often biased, depending on the translators.* In the American Standard Version of 1901, the Revised Standard Version, and the New Revised Standard, translators recognized this pitfall and left the word *sheol* *untranslated* 63 times. The New King James Bible left it *untranslated* 18 times. Since this problem exists in most translations, we must be cautious in considering the context to get the proper understanding. Where it would not make sense for translators to render the Word *sheol* as *hell*, they interpreted it as *grave* or *pit*. Please read: 1 Samuel 2:6; Job 14:13; Hosea 13:14; Psa. 49:14-15; Psa. 30:3.

Let us now look at some texts translating *sheol* as *hell*. Psalm 18:4-5: "*The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of **hell** compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me*" (KJV). David (who the Scriptures say was "*a man after God's own heart*" - Acts 13:22) had no fear of going to a fiery hell, because he knew that when he died he would be in the grave until the resurrection. Later in life, he stated in Psa. 88:3, "*For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draws nigh unto the **grave***" (KJV). This confirms that the true translation of Psalm 18:4-5 above should be **grave**. The NAS, NIV, and others also render *sheol* as *grave* and not *hell*.

Let us look at one more text, found in Ezekiel 31:15-17: "*Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when he went down to the **grave** I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him. I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to **hell** with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth. They also went down into **hell** with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen*" (KJV). Both times where the word *hell* and the one rendered *grave* are used,

they come from the Hebrew word *sheol*. This text, speaking of those who had died, in an unbiased translation would have rendered all three words as *grave*.

The “hell-fire” doctrine, so often attributed to God, where unsaved souls shall experience excruciating pain and suffering forever, is an abomination in the sight of God. Jeremiah 32:35 states: *“And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, **neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination**, to cause Judah to sin”* (KJV). If God condemned this type of torturous sacrifice which was but *temporary torture*, and said such a thing never even entered His mind, how can any believe that He invented a place called *hell* where unsaved souls would be tortured forever with no hope for it to end?

### Hell in the New Testament

Let us now consider the word *hell* in the New Testament. The New Testament was written in Greek and uses the word *hades*. In the American Standard Version of 1901, the Revised Standard, and the New Revised Standard, *hades* is left untranslated 10 times; in the New King James Version, 11 times and in the New International, 5 times. Again, since this problem exists in most translations, we must carefully consider the context to get the proper understanding.

Acts 2:27 quotes from Psalm 16:10. Acts 2:27 says, *“Because **you will not leave my soul in hell**, neither will you suffer your Holy One to see corruption”* (KJV). If hell was a place that one was condemned to forever, why would David say that God will not **leave** his soul in **hell**? It was because David knew of the resurrection of the dead, and thus knew God would not leave his soul in the **grave** forever because of God’s promise of a Savior.

Jesus, speaking in Rev.1:18, says, *“I am He that lives and **was dead** and, behold, **I am alive for evermore**, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death”* (KJV). Jesus truly died and was in the tomb (grave) for three days, then God raised Him up to life (Acts 2:32). This agrees with the texts in the previous paragraph: *“....neither wilt you suffer your Holy One (Jesus) to see corruption (decay).”* Rom. 14:9 says, *“For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life, so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living”* (NIV). *“For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living”* (KJV). Jesus will be Lord over the resurrected dead in his coming Kingdom, for all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth (John 5:28, 29).

### Meaning of Gehenna

What about the word *gehenna*, also translated as *hell*? *Gehenna*, according to the reputable McClintock and Strong Cyclopedia, was a place in the Valley of Hinnom which is a little south of Jerusalem. *“It became the common lay-stall of the city, where the dead bodies of criminals, and the carcasses of animals, and every other kind of filth was cast. From the depth and narrow-ness of the gorge, and perhaps, its ever-burning fires, as well as it being the receptacle of all sorts of putrefying matter and all that defiled the Holy City, it became in later times the image of the place of everlasting punishment.”*

It is important to note that nothing alive was cast into this gorge -only *dead bodies* of criminals and animals. Nothing suffered in it. Whatever was cast into it was totally destroyed in the ever-burning fires. Jesus, when referring to *gehenna*, used it as a symbol of *total destruction*, of that which passed into oblivion to be seen no more. Men later put their own interpretation on *gehenna*, and then associated it with their *hell-fire* teachings.

Matthew 5:29 uses the Greek word ***gehenna***, but the KJV and many others render it ***hell***. "*And if your right eye offend you, pluck it out, and cast it from you: for it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish and not that your whole body be cast into hell (gehenna)*" (KJV). Jesus uses the word *perish* which means *to stop existing*. So Jesus is saying that it is better for one offending body member to perish than for the eventuality of the whole body perishing. There are those in Churchianity who claim that the *body* goes to the *grave* while the *soul* goes to *hell*. From reading texts such as the one just quoted, we can see how eternal torment is not taught in any form. Jesus used the word *gehenna* to symbolize ***total destruction***, knowing that anything in it was always destroyed. We read in Genesis 3:19 that a person's body returns to dust at death.

In Matt. 5:29 quoted above, Jesus used members of the body to symbolize those things which are very precious to us. As disciples of Jesus, should some material possessions stand in our way of gaining eternal life, it would be better to give them up rather than lose life. Mark 9:43-48 repeats Matt. 5:29, 20, but there it is also stated that *worms* are found in hell (*gehenna*). Mark was referring to Isaiah 66:24, where the Prophet had referred to the dead bodies in the Valley of Hinnom. As long as it contained something combustible, the fire kept burning, and as long as the fires left something there for the worms to eat, they did not die out. However, if you go there today, you will not see either fire or worms!

In Job 17, worms are associated with the corruption of the grave and Job 24:19 states that the grave will consume the sinners. *Gehenna* infers destruction and death for all wicked.

In Luke 12:4, 5, our Lord tells us, "*I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell (gehenna); fear him*" (NIV). Jesus was saying we should never fear man who can only kill the body, but we are to fear God, who is able to cast us into *gehenna* or total destruction -- annihilation. When a man is killed by another man, his eternal existence is not jeopardized. However, the wicked, whom God considers incorrigible, will be everlastingly destroyed. That is what is meant when they will be *cast into gehenna*. God considers these unfit for eternal life. We have only listed some of the Scriptures where *gehenna* is rendered as *hell* in the KJV. In all others, the meaning of *gehenna* remains the same. It is *a symbol of total destruction* and not eternal torture!

Another Greek word, which appears only in 2 Peter 2:4, is translated "*cast them down to hell*" in the KJV. It is the verb *tartaroo*, from the Greek mythological Tartaros, and describes the incarceration of disobedient angels who are kept there as they await their judgment. There again, the word *hell* was a poor translation of the Greek word.

### Parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus

Before beginning our study on this story, we will quote it here in full. Luke 16:19-31: "*There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a*

***beggar** named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. The time came when **the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment**, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, '**Father Abraham**, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'* But Abraham replied, '**Son**, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.' He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead'' (NIV).

Many have debated this text. Some recognize it as the parable it is, that is, a story told in illustration to teach a lesson. Others believe that the entire text must be taken literally and as a statement of fact. Therefore, our first object will be to separate these two beliefs and determine which is the truth. Does Luke 16:19-31 describe a parable to teach a lesson or is it a statement of literal events? **Jesus spoke only in parables.** This parable was given to the Pharisees by our Lord Jesus Christ (see vs. 14), so all of it was His words. With this in mind, we should examine these words in order to determine how God would have us understand what His Son was teaching.

**Matthew 13:34** - *"Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable."*

**Mark 4:33-34** - *"With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything."*

**Matthew 13:10-12** - *"The disciples came to him and asked, 'Why do you speak to the people in parables?' He replied, 'The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to **you**, but not to **them**.'"*

Please read also Matt. 13:13-17. These verses should firmly settle the question of whether the story of the rich man and Lazarus is literal or not. Whenever our Lord spoke to the multitudes, He spoke **ONLY** in parables. If you are going to believe the Bible, you must conclude that this story is indeed a parable, teaching a lesson.

Luke recorded six parables in succession, the first one beginning in Luke 15:4. They were in response to how the Pharisees and Scribes looked down on the fact that Jesus fellowshiped with publicans (tax collectors) and sinners. (See vs. 1-3). We find that all six of these parables are interrelated.

**Problems with a literal interpretation** - Before we give a symbolic interpretation of this parable, we would like you to consider it literally. This should, in itself, prove how unscriptural and absurd it becomes. This parable describes two men, one very rich and the other very poor. Be sure to note how nothing is said about the rich man being evil or any kind of a sinner. If you believed in eternal torture, would you condemn someone to hell simply because he was richly dressed and lived well? The only reason given to the rich man by Abraham for his torment was that he had received *good things* during his lifetime. There is *nothing said against his moral character*.

The poor man in the parable was dressed in rags, hungry, and full of sores while lying at the rich man's gate; the dogs came and licked his sores. Nothing whatever is said about Lazarus being a good man or a sanctified believer, having accepted Jesus as his personal Savior, or that he was even a repentant sinner. Would you say that Lazarus deserved heaven simply because he was poor and full of sores? The only reason given to the rich man by Abraham as to why Lazarus was comforted was because Lazarus had received *bad things* in his lifetime. If the parable is to be taken literally, we must conclude that the world's only hope of heaven would be to dress in rags, be full of sores and let dogs lick them. We can see the absurdity of taking our Lord's words literally.

### **Symbolic Interpretation of the Rich Man in the Parable**

There are various interpretations of this parable. The following is one that appeals to us as Scripturally sound. We believe that the rich man represents a group of people, namely, the Jewish nation and especially the religious leaders who have a fixed gulf between themselves and Abraham. Note that it was the Pharisees that claimed Abraham as their father in John 8:53.

In vs. 19, the rich man is said to have been *"clothed in purple and fine linen, living in luxury every day."* At the time of our Lord's first advent and for many centuries before, the Jewish nation **had lived lavishly every day**. They were God's chosen people and a royal priesthood and were the special recipients of God's favor. *"You only have I known of all the families of the earth," God says in Amos 3:2.*

In Romans 3:1, 2, the Apostle Paul asked, *"What advantage then has the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision?"* And then he answers his own question, *"Much in every way; chiefly, because to them were committed the oracles of God."* Yes, from Moses to Christ, the Jewish nation enjoyed God's special blessings, protection, and prosperity. They were spiritually the richest people on earth. We find in Exodus 19:5, 6 how God loved His people so much that He promised to make them *"a kingdom of priests and an holy nation,"* if they would obey His voice.

In the parable, the rich man wore *purple*. According to the Compact Topical Bible, page 394, "Purple was a mark of distinction. Royalty was so dressed." This shows that Jesus was not talking about an ordinary rich man, but rather, one rich in royalty. The Exodus text reveals that Israel had received and were clothed in royal promises.

This rich man was also dressed in *fine linen*. Fine linen, as used in the Bible, is a symbol of *righteousness*. The fine linen symbolized the *typical justification* the Jews enjoyed, through animal sacrifices which were slain to offer them a temporary covering over of their sins. Referring to the Bride of Christ in Rev. 19:8, the *fine linen* mentioned there symbolizes *the righteousness* of the saints. They will certainly warrant that fine white linen, whereas the *holier than thou* religious leaders of Israel surely did not.

In vs. 21, the *table* from which the rich man ate was symbolic of the Divine Word, Laws and Decrees that were strictly for Israel. The Jews ate of that table and were blessed as they obeyed.

As stated in John 6:54-58, after Jesus came into the world and paid our ransom, it is now His body and blood that we must eat or partake of in order to receive justification. Those typical sacrifices were for the purpose of directing Israel to Christ Jesus and which are now fulfilled in Him alone.

Romans 11:9 states that since the Jewish nation as a whole rejected Christ, their *table* would become a snare. It represented the fulfillment found in the Lord Jesus Christ. This *table* should have led them to Jesus, but most rejected Him and chose to continue to trust in that which His death did away with when He nailed the Law to the cross. That *table*, all pointing to Christ, surely did become a snare to them.

### **Symbolic Interpretation of Lazarus**

We believe the poor man in this parable represented a group of people also, namely the truth-hungry Gentiles who were seeking after God.

They symbolically lay at the gate of the *rich man*. No rich pro-mises or royalty were theirs. They were not even typically cleansed from their sins as were the Jews through their animal sacrifices. Rather, they were in moral sickness, pollution, idolatry and sin. They were companions of *dogs*, and were detestable to the Jews. Those outsiders were called *heathen* and *dogs* by the typically clean Jew. The Jews couldn't eat with, marry, nor have any dealings at all with the Gentiles.

Speaking to the Gentiles, the Apostle Paul declared in Eph. 2:12, "*Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.*" In this parable, Lazarus was said to be laying at the rich man's gate, full of sores, desiring to be fed mere crumbs from the rich man's table. Since God's promises were given strictly to the Jews, the Gentiles were indeed aliens, and all they could hope for was whatever *crumbs* the Jews cared to give them. Even the name *Lazarus* can give us an insight into why our Lord used this name for the beggar. According to the dictionary in Young's Concordance, the word *Lazarus* means *without help* and it shows the condition of the Gentiles at that time.

The words of our Lord to the Syrophenician woman give us a key as to how the Gentiles ate the *crumbs* of Divine favor, which fell from Israel's rich table. When she asked Jesus to heal her daughter, He said to this Gentile woman, "...it is not fit to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." In response, she answered, "...True, Lord, yet the dogs eat the *crumbs* which fall from their master's table" (Matt. 15:26, 27). Jesus then healed her daughter, and in that way He gave her the crumbs of favor for which she asked.

### **Death of the Rich Man and Lazarus**

In vs. 22 of this parable, we read that the beggar was carried into *Abraham's bosom* after he died. It is also stated there that the rich man died and was buried. Please note that Lazarus went to Abraham's bosom and *NOT* to heaven when he died. Abraham's bosom is not referred to as heaven anywhere in the Bible.

"And no man has ascended into heaven but He that came down from heaven" (John 3:13). These were our Lord's words, so it is evident that neither Lazarus nor Abraham had gone to heaven. In Genesis 25:8 we are told that Abraham died and gave up the spirit. The dictionary of Young's Concordance defines the Hebrew word translated there as "to gasp out, to expire." So, Abraham expired or died. He is, to this day, still in the grave, and will remain there until the soon coming resurrection of the dead!

Since Lazarus could not literally have gone to Abraham's bosom in heaven, the question is, just what is meant by this expression? The answer can be found by a study of God's promises to the Church. It has to the Jew that Jesus was first sent. *"I am not sent except unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel"* (Matt. 5:24). The Jews were the first to hear His message after He came into the world. That was because God's promises were made to them initially. However, as stated in John 1:11, 12, most of the nation rejected the Messiah. The rejection opened a way so that the heavenly call could then go out to the Gentiles. It is *now* that the Gentiles are in the most favored position. Many of the promises that God once made to Abraham, in reference to his offspring, the nation of Israel, now belong to the Church which is made up mostly of Gentiles. Surely, the most favored position one can be in is a *bosom* position, so the Gentile Church is *now* in that position and heirs to God's heavenly promises to be a Kingdom of Priests and joint-heirs with Christ.

According to this allegory, the death of the rich man was not like that of the beggar. As stated in vs. 22, the rich man died and was buried. Since the rich man symbolically represented the nation of Israel, his death showed the death condition that came upon Israel after the Jews rejected Christ. They then lost all of God's special favor.

In vs. 23, Jesus says that the rich man was in hell (hades, the grave), being in torment and seeing Abraham afar off. Jesus was not speaking of a literal place of torment there, because we have already proven that the text we are examining in this lesson is a parable. Had Jesus been referring to a literal hell-fire, the rich man would have asked for far more than one drop of water to cool his tongue. But consider how great has been the torment of the Jews since their rejection of Jesus Christ! As a nation they were not persuaded, even when one rose from the dead, vs. 31. Since the time that God's promises were offered to the Gentiles, most Jews have had very little peace. They have been tormented in the fires of persecution and pogroms these past 2,000 years, and still undergo a bitter struggle to survive in a world that is bent on exterminating them! Many were literally thrown into ovens during the horrors of Hitler's Nazi regime.

### The Great Fixed Gulf or Chasm

What is pictured by this *great gulf or chasm* that was a *fixed* separation between the rich man and his access to Abraham's bosom? Note the words of vs. 26: *"And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us."* The gulf between them was impassable. Those on either side could not cross over. This could well represent God's divine decree casting them off **as a nation** to be His Kingdom of priests due to their faithlessness and unbelief. Jesus came to His own, but *His own received Him not*. Israel, *the rich man*, would not be able to cross back over into the position of favor from the other side because **as a nation**, they had rejected God's Son. Their original design to be God's *special treasure* was forever lost to them as a nation. In AD 70 the cast-off Jewish nation would undergo a fiery and brutal attack by the Romans where millions were killed and many crucified on the hillsides and walls of Jerusalem. Thus was fulfilled their own words, *"His blood be on us and on our children."* Those that survived would be dispersed (hidden in Hades) throughout the world where they would suffer anti-Semitic pogroms and persecutions down to this day. Thus, the rich man was in torment, enduring great suffering. **Note:** In vs. 25 the rich man is still called *son* and Abraham is still called *father*. He was not cast off forever. See Romans 11:26.



### The Key to this Parable or Allegory

We find the assuring proof as to who this rich man represents in the statement concerning his five brothers. When he asked that Lazarus go to his five brothers, Abraham told him that *the brothers had Moses and the prophets. Only Israel* had Moses and the prophets! They were divided into twelve tribes. Following the Babylonian captivity, it was mostly people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin that returned to Israel. Therefore, it mainly was these two tribes to whom Jesus spoke and who could be represented by the rich man. With this in mind, one can see that the other ten tribes could be represented by the five brothers who also had Moses and the prophets. Thus, the parable showed how the five brothers shared the same fate because they failed to hear Moses and the prophets.

### The Lake of Fire

In order to understand the *hell* of Revelation, which in Greek is called *hades*, let us read Peter's words found in Acts 2:31: "*Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was not abandoned to the grave, nor did His body see decay.*" What is this *hell* (hades) from which Jesus was delivered so as not to see corruption? This 31st vs. definitely speaks of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. From what was our Lord resurrected? From death, of course! How long was He dead? The Scriptures definitely teach that He was dead three days and three nights. Where was Jesus during this time? Let the Lord give us the answer: "*For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days in the heart of the earth*" (Matt. 12:40). Where was our Lord for three days and three nights? He was in the grave!

Since the Lord was in *hell* (hades, the grave) for three days and nights and was resurrected therefrom, what are we to understand of the *hell* of Revelation 20:14, which is cast into the lake of fire? For it is this *hell* (hades, the grave), together with death, that is cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death, i.e., total and absolute destruction of the hell (gehenna) of Mark 9:43, about which the Lord warned us. The Scriptures are very definite about these two conditions. Men may deny *hell* (gehenna), the lake of fire, as a future condition, but they cannot deny the *hell* (hades, the grave) which exists now and has existed ever since our first parents transgressed God's Law. Confusion will be removed when we understand that the Bible *hell* (hades) is fully represented in *the grave*. When we disassociate that from the lake of fire in Rev. 20:14, it will become very clear that death and hell (hades, the grave) will be forever destroyed in that lake of fire, also represented by the *gehenna* of the Bible as the second death. There is a *gehenna* to be shunned, but no one can escape death or being in the *hell* (hades) of the Bible. All go into it, "*for in Adam all die.*" It was for this reason that Jesus Christ came and died, to deliver us from death and the grave. And, when He comes again, He has assured us that: "...**ALL** that are in their *graves* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth..." (John 5:28, 29).

The following are some symbols used in reference to hell and the grave: **Isaiah 5:14** describes hell as having a *mouth*. (The hell from sheol, the grave or pit.) **Amos 9:2** asks if a person can *dig* into hell. No one can literally dig into a hell of fire, but they can *dig into the pits of the earth*, a better rendering for the Hebrew word *sheol*. **Prov. 30:15, 16** states that the grave (sheol) is *never satisfied*. If taken literally, this seems to say that the grave can *think*. Actually, the grave is never satisfied, because at present there is no end to the amount of people who die and go there.

These are but a few examples of the many found in the Bible, dealing with symbolisms. In order to properly understand the Bible, one must be aware of the way symbols are used and learn how to

understand what they represent. If this is done, then the false doctrines, such as **hell** being a place of eternal torture and other false teachings, will easily be discarded. God's love for humanity will then become manifest. Everyone will then be able to serve Him out of love and deep appreciation, instead of from fear of what God will do to them if they disobey.

### **A Preview Of The Finished Kingdom**

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth.

Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act.

There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay -- not even the fear of such things.

Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness.

The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance.

Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

Revelation 21:3-5:

***"And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.' He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'"***

### **Psalm 145:1-13**

*I will exalt you, my God the King;  
I will praise your name for ever and ever.  
Every day I will praise you  
and extol your name for ever and ever.  
Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;  
his greatness no one can fathom.  
One generation will commend your works to another;  
they will tell of your mighty acts.  
They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty,  
and I will meditate on your wonderful works.  
They will tell of the power of your awesome works,  
and I will proclaim your great deeds.  
They will celebrate your abundant goodness  
and joyfully sing of your righteousness.  
The LORD is gracious and compassionate,  
slow to anger and rich in love.  
The LORD is good to all;*

*he has compassion on all he has made.  
All you have made will praise you,  
O LORD; your saints will extol you.  
They will tell of the glory of your kingdom  
and speak of your might,  
so that all men may know of your mighty acts  
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.  
Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,  
and your dominion endures through all generations.  
The LORD is faithful to all his promises  
and loving toward all he has made."*

**CHRISTIAN DISCIPLING MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL**  
**32 Chapel Lane, Somersworth, NH 03878**