

# The Suffering in Hell

Note: All Scripture references are King James Version, 1769 Edition. Other versions are not cited except in version comparisons or as explanations of where individuals erred in source material.

In all likelihood, Hell is one of the most misunderstood places in existence. Despite what some claim, it does exist, and, despite the severe mischaracterization of many who do believe and know it exists, it is a very real place, albeit a spiritual place, not physical.

Most that believe in Hell classify the suffering experienced there as only a continual burning. Hence, many argue against the suffering experienced there as not possible. However, the LORD God does demonstrate clearly in His word that such suffering does take place, but it is far more than a simple burning and never being consumed. We must be cognizant that the declared way the LORD God deals with man does not change once man leaves this life and enters into eternity, regardless of where any specific individual goes, whether Heaven or Hell. The overarching principle is found in the following declaration:

I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:10)

We must also remember that the LORD God does not want anyone to go to Hell, and is displeased when they do.

Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye. (Ezekiel 18:31-32)

And again:

Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 33:11)

Thus, though the LORD God does not want anyone to go there, since there are persons who want nothing to do with the LORD, they must go somewhere. Hence, Hell is the only place that can be made for them.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: . . . (Matthew 25:41)

Moreover, since those individuals are focused on self and serving self above the LORD God who made them, the LORD will render unto them a totally self-focused existence.

There are six easily identifiable aspects to the suffering those who are there, and those who will go there, experience:

1. The sense of burning, but never consumed. [*Exodus 3:2; Revelation 14:9-11; Luke 16:23-24*]
2. The gnawing of regret and sorrow which is never-ending. [*Isaiah 66:24; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:25*]
3. The clear sense and perception of anger and wrath directed at the person directly. [*Romans 1:18; John 3:36; I Thessalonians 1:9-10*]
4. The sense of being totally alone. [*Luke 16:22-26*]
5. Being able to "see" where you could be. [*Luke 16:22-26*]
6. Having no sense that time has passed. [*Revelation 10:5-6*]

We should first understand that all the suffering experienced is spiritual, that is, in the soul and spirit, not in the body. At this point in a person's existence, the body lies in the grave and is not functional, as the soul is not in it anymore. The soul and spirit are in Hell as the soul did not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of its

sins, and justification and reconciliation unto the Father. The reason this is the criteria for existence outside of Hell in eternity is predicated upon two things which are utterly crucial:

*The LORD God is man's Creator and the provider of everything for man's existence.*

*Man, by virtue of the disobedience of Adam, inherits iniquity from his ancestors, in body, soul and spirit. Being unequal in all his substance, man cannot free himself from this.*

Because individuals are focused on self and what they want versus acknowledging and respecting their Creator, and reject fellowship with the LORD God, the LORD, in accordance with their hearts and the way they are, grants them the following in eternity:

### **1. To be burned, but never consumed:**

And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. (Exodus 3:2)

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. (Luke 16:23-24)

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 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: And the smoke of

their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. (Rev 14:9-11)

What this does is make one keenly aware of oneself. When you are in pain, you are most certainly self-focused. We should note here that the reference to “day nor night” in the passage from Revelation is there for us to understand in the context of our current existence. The term “day nor night” simply means “never.” Hence, there is no break in the torment – ever.

## **2. The gnawing of regret and sorrow which is never-ending:**

And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh. (*Isaiah 66:24*)

And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (*Mark 9:43-48*)

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. (*Luke 16:25*)

The “worm” mentioned here is the gnawing of regret at the things done. It eats at a person on the inside. During our life on this earth, we experience that gnawing of regret and sorrow at things we have done that we later realize we ought

not to have done. Thus, this allows them to focus on their decisions in the life they had on this earth, and the choices they made.

### **3. The clear sense and perception of anger and wrath against the person directly:**

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. (Romans 1:18-19)

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. (John 3:36)

For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. (I Thessalonians 1:9-10)

Seeing the decisions they made were directly contrary to their very existence, it is and will be, fully understandable to them why they have personally earned the wrath of the LORD.

### **4. The sense of being totally alone:**

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that

would come from thence. (Luke 16:23-26)

One of the things that is comforting to everyone is to have others commiserate with them in their suffering. It allows others to focus on us, and makes us the center of attention. However, here that is denied and man is to focus on himself and comfort himself, by himself. If we note in the passage above, there is no one present with the rich man. He mentions no one else and Abraham never cites anyone else. As far as the rich man can perceive, he is the only one there.

#### **5. Being able to “see” where you could be:**

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. (Luke 16:23-26)

Again, the passage from Luke is instructive in letting us know that those in Hell will be able to see where they could have gone had they chose differently, and not been so focused on themselves. Here again, this drives them to analyze why they did what they did in their time on earth.

#### **6. Having no sense that time has passed:**

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: . . . (Revelation 10:5-6)

The phrase "*that there should be time no longer:*" is pretty clear as to what the LORD means. However, to clarify: Having no sense that time has passed is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, if it applies to something we enjoy, it really doesn't matter. If it applies to some unpleasant situation (or worse), it increases the misery factor unbelievably.

But we should consider how it is that we mark time. We perceive the passing of time by activity. Something, somewhere within our realm of perception is active, and we are quite used to that. If you are familiar with sensory deprivation and its effects, then you are aware that the complete loss of time sensation happens, completely disorienting the mind and causing considerable anxiety.

Both in Heaven and Hell, particularly in the new heaven and earth, there is no rising and setting of the sun to mark days, no change of seasons to mark weeks, months and years:

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. (Revelation 21:22-23)

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. (Revelation 22:1-5)

Although there will not be “time” in the sense that we know it here on earth, there will nonetheless be activity in heaven, and things can be marked as having happened in relation to other events (coming before or after). But, it is not so in Hell or the Lake of Fire, as the Lord Jesus relates in the telling of the rich man in Hell:

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. (*Luke 16:22-26*)

Other than this one event, the rich man has no other event recorded that happened (and the declaration of time being ended is not yet), and the rich man has no other interaction with anyone. Hence, even at this time, there is no way for the rich man to determine that time has passed. He simply has an event that happened, and cannot tell when it happened. He will have one other identifiable event that will happen to him:

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which



were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (*Revelation 20:11-15*)

Being taken out of Hell to stand in the docket and be judged, in which he will find out precisely why he is condemned, will not be a pleasant experience. Rather, he will find out exactly what Job confessed:

Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. (*Job 42:1-2*)

Once he bows the knee willingly, (and he will, being shattered by the fact that every thought he ever had is now revealed – that there was no such thing as privacy and private, secret thoughts) he will be cast into the lake of fire to again experience no change in environment – just constant pain, regret and sorrow, with the clear sense of the LORD's anger toward him. For the rich man, there is no passing of time – this moment is exactly like the moment before, and the moment to come will be exactly like the present moment – endlessly.

There is, particularly for those in Hell and the Lake of Fire, time no more.

One of the things which makes anything more bearable is the ability to mark the passage of time. It keeps us stable and assured that there is a hoped for end to whatever situation we are in. By denying this, the LORD insures that those in Hell have that hope taken away and are totally free to focus on themselves and their suffering and misery.

The suffering that is listed above, being spiritual, and being, as we perceive it in the flesh, internal to us, cannot be touched or alleviated in any way. Where pain in the flesh can be adapted to by the body, and can even be enjoyed by some

as it releases endorphins, pain and suffering in the soul cannot be touched. The pain of the soul is only alleviated by forgiveness and closure of the incident that causes the pain. In Hell, that is not going to happen.

By casting the individual, body, soul and spirit, into the lake of fire, the only thing that will be added to the suffering of the soul and spirit will be never-ending, extremely intense physical pain.

There again, that will force the individual in the lake of fire to focus on themselves.