

## **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HELL? Matthew 10:28**

Int: Hell began to fade in the US in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Universalists decided God was too good to condemn anyone to go there and Unitarians concluded humanity was too good for God to punish. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it all but disappeared. And no one noticed! Even evangelicals have no taste for fire and brimstone. People in the pulpits and pews may doubt hell but it has neither disappeared nor changed. What the Bible says about it is still true. Scripture says hell is

### **REAL**

All who deny hell's reality need to know whom they challenge. To deny hell is real is to call PAUL a liar (2 Thess 1:5-9), to contradict OTHER INSPIRED WRITINGS (Heb RED WRITINGS (Heb 10:27; Jude 4; Rev 14:10-11, 20:14-15), and, worst of all, to repudiate the authority of Jesus Christ! Jesus said more about hell than anybody else in the Bible. *Gehenna*, the technical word for hell, appears only 12 times in the New Testament. Eleven times it is on the lips of Jesus; three times in Mark (9:42-48), seven times in Matthew (5:22, 29-30, 10:28, 18:8-9, 23:15, 33), and once in Luke (12:15).

A person may dislike the whole idea of hell. But who is so arrogant as to claim he knows better about the matter than Jesus and his apostles??

Hell is real!

### **AND REAL HOT**

That hell is real hot comes out again and again in the New Testament (Mt 3:12; 13:42, 50; 25:41, 46; Rev 20:15). Expressions such as "hell of fire," "lake of fire," and "flames" indicate the awfulness of the place. Anyone who says these are just symbols must remember that a symbol always stands for something very real and that the reality is greater than the symbol. If fire is a symbol, it stands for something real and much worse than fire!

There are degrees of punishment in hell (Mt 11:22, 24; Lu 12:47-48). The hottest spots are for the greatest sinners. But the coolest place in hell is more than a man can bear.

Hell is real and real hot!

### **FOR A REAL LONG TIME**

Some do not believe hell lasts forever. They think people who go there get a second chance so that eventually everyone is saved. But the Bible gives no encouragement for either view. Those who go to hell go forever. And forever is a long, long time.

The story of Lazarus and the rich man shows that if a man dies without God there is no hope for a second chance on the other side. A great gulf "has been and remains fixed" (Lu 16:26; perfect tense) between saved and lost. There is no crossing over. And Jesus said the saved go to "eternal life" while the cursed go to "eternal punishment" (Mt 25:46). In both cases "eternal" is the same word (*aionios*). If heaven never ends, neither does hell!

Hell is real and real hot for a real long time!

Con: Where is hell? I know. It is at the end of a Christless life!