

“HELL”

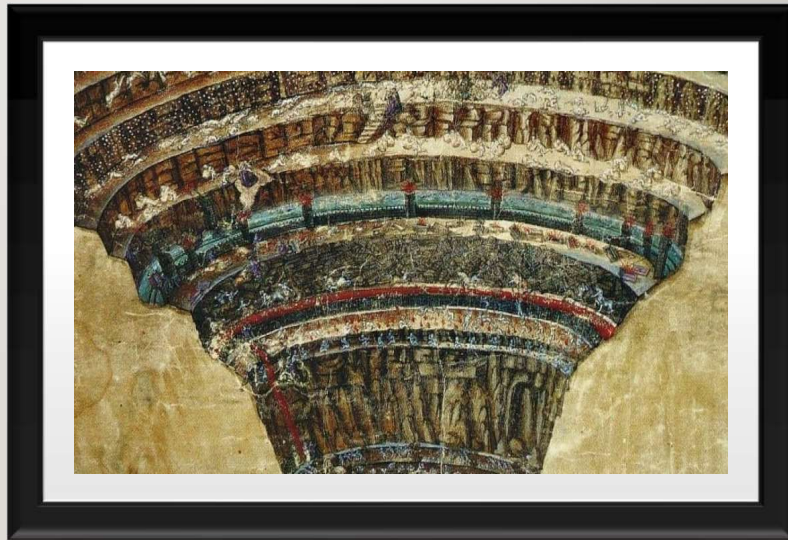
Tradition vs. the Scriptures

There is no hell. The concept of people suffering eternal conscious fiery torment, by God - no less - is pure fiction.

HELL IN POPULAR CULTURE

Early understanding of Hell came from a mixture of religion with movies and TV: *God ruled Heaven and the Devil ruled Hell. **If you were good, you went to heaven, if you were bad, you went to Hell.***

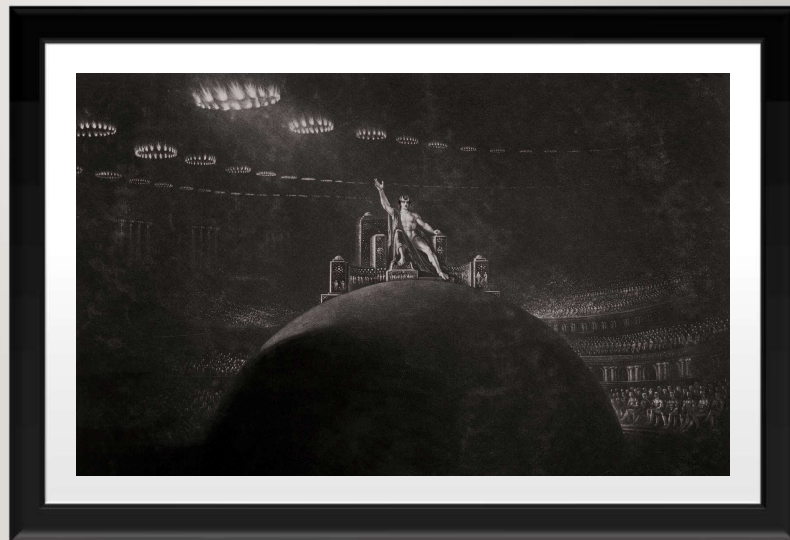
DANTE'S
DIVINE
COMEDY



Boticelli's Map of Hell from Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

Translator John Ciardi - Hell is the "realm ... of those who have rejected spiritual values by yielding to bestial appetites or violence, or by perverting their human intellect to fraud or malice against their fellowmen"

MILTON'S
PARADISE
LOST



John Martin's depiction of Satan presiding over the infernal council
At Pandemonium the capital city of Hell from Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

THE THREE
STOOGES
*I'LL NEVER
HEIL AGAIN*



The Three Stooges - *I'll Never Heil Again*

LOONEY
TUNES
(SYLVESTER &
TWEETY)
SATAN'S WAITIN'



Satan's Waitin'.

Most works depicted Hell as the place where bad people went because they did bad things in this life - they would be doomed to be tortured eternally.

Most portrayals **rarely involve God** – or if they do, He is merely **Satan's opposite yet equal**. Satan is more clever than God as he regularly bests God by tricking people into ending up in Hell.

Absolute nonsense!

TRADITION / ORTHODOXY

Bible.org "What the Bible Says About Hell"

THE MAJORITY VIEW

Everyone will exist eternally either in heaven or hell.

Hell was designed originally for Satan and his demons.

Hell will also punish the sin of those who reject Christ.

Hell is conscious torment.

Hell is eternal and irreversible.

Fair representation of the traditional view of Hell.

Not mentioned that **it is God who is tormenting people for all of eternity**, according to tradition.

God controls Hell. God is responsible for torturing unbelievers for all of eternity.

THE BIBLE

“HELL” IN THE KING JAMES BIBLE

Old Testament:
31



New Testament:
23

King James Bible: English word “hell” used 54 times - 31 (OT) and 23 (NT).

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE OLD TESTAMENT

HELL = "SHEOL"



Each of the 31 Old Testament instances of the English word "hell" is the Hebrew word "*sheol*".

"Sheol" is also used for the words "underworld" and "pit"



JOB 11:8

Job 11 (KJV)

11:8 It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than **hell**; what canst thou know?

Job 11 (FAA)

11:8 What *can* you undertake *concerning* the heights of heaven? What *can* you know about *what is* deeper than the **underworld**?

1st chronological usage

Graham Thomason's Far Above All translation: <https://faraboveall.com/>

First mention of "hell" is better translated and understood as "underworld".

ADAM'S WARNING

Genesis 3 (KJV)

3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou **return unto the ground**; for out of it wast thou taken: for **dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.**

Adam's warning: he came from dust, and he would return to dust at death. No mention of Hell here.

THE PEOPLE IN NOAH'S DAY

Genesis 6 (KJV)

6:5 And GOD saw that **the wickedness of man was great** in the earth, and that **every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**

6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

6:7 And the LORD said, **I will destroy man** whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

By Noah's time, still have no record of anyone being told that they would spend eternity suffering torment by fire in Hell.

JOB 26:6

Job 26 (KJV)

26:6 Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

Job 26 (FAA)

26:6 The grave is naked before him, And *there is* no covering for *the place of* destruction.

Sheol is “grave”.

The word “destruction” is used in this verse. Traditional hell is never-ending - incompatible with destruction.

Still no record of anyone being told that they would spend eternity in traditional Hell.

2 SAMUEL 22:6 / PSALMS 18:5

2 Samuel 22:6 / Psalms 18:5 (KJV)

The sorrows of **hell** compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me;

2 Samuel 22:6 / Psalms 18:5 (FAA)

The tightening grip of the grave encompassed me, Deadly snares confronted me.

David is worried about being killed by his enemies, not about spending eternity in fiery torment.

PSALMS 9:17

Psalms 9:17 (KJV)

The wicked shall be turned into **hell**, and all the nations that forget God.

Psalms 9:17 (FAA)

The wicked will return to the grave, *As will* all the nations forgetful of God.

The wicked will die.

PSALMS 16:10

Psalms 16:10 (KJV)

For thou wilt not leave my soul in **hell**; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Psalms 16:10 (FAA)

For you will not leave my being in the grave, Nor will you allow your holy *one* to see decay.

How can David say that God won't leave him in Hell? God doesn't take anyone out of Hell. Hell is eternal with no reprieve.

PSALMS 86:13

Psalms 86:13 (KJV)

For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest **hell**.

Psalms 86:13 (FAA)

For your kindness towards me is great, And you have delivered my being from the lowest **underworld**.

Again, God doesn't take anyone out of Hell.

David is speaking of being dead and that God will not leave David dead. David had the hope of resurrection.

PSALMS 139:8

Psalms 139:8 (KJV)

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in **hell**, behold, thou art there.

Psalms 139:8 (FAA)

If I ascend *to* heaven, You *are* there; Or *if* I make my bed *in* the **underworld**, Behold, you *are there*.

How is it any comfort knowing that God is there while I'm being tortured by Him for all of eternity?

What's truly comforting, and what this verse means, is that God does not abandon us – even after we die. When we die, he hasn't forgotten us and we will put on immortality when He resurrects us. THAT's comforting.

PROVERBS 15:11

Proverbs 15:11 (KJV)

Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?

Proverbs 15:11 (FAA)

The grave and destruction *are* before the Lord; How much more the hearts of the sons of Adam!

Never-ending torture in Hell, or destruction? Can't be both.

PROVERBS 27:20

Proverbs 27:20 (KJV)

Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

Proverbs 27:20 (FAA)

The grave and destruction are never satisfied, And never satisfied are the eyes of man.

“the grave” again

JONAH 2:2

Jonah 2:2 (KJV)

And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of **hell** cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

Jonah 2:2 (FAA)

And he said, I called on account of my predicament to the Lord, And he answered me. I cried out from the belly of the **underworld**, And you heard my voice.

Jonah was inside a fish and not in Hell.

Six times *sheol* is better understood as “underworld” and 25 times it is better understood as “grave”. These verses only refer to dying or being dead and not to eternal conscious torture.

JONAH 3

Jonah 3 (KJV)

3:4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

3:8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.

3:9 Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

Jonah's warning to the Ninevites.

And the King of Nineveh's response in verse 8 and 9.

Jonah's warning to the Ninevites never addressed their eternal state – Jonah warned them they will be destroyed.

Jonah and all of God's messengers were lousy evangelists.

Why didn't God warn anyone of Hell... at all... in 4000 years?

THE NEW TESTAMENT

If Hell is nowhere to be found in the Old Testament, should we expect to find it in the New Testament?

THE NEW TESTAMENT

| | | |
|--------|------------|----------|
| | “GEHENNA” | γέεννα |
| HELL = | “HADES” | ᾅδης |
| | “TARTARUS” | ταρταρόω |

23 uses of “hell” in the NT. Three Greek words: *Gehenna*, *Hades*, and *Tartarus*.

GEHENNA γέεννα

GEHENNA

- *Gehenna* is translated as “hell” 12 times in the King James Bible.
- *Gehenna* was a literal place also known as “The Valley of the Children of Hinnom”



Gehenna is translated as “hell” 12 times in the King James Bible. Seven times in Matthew’s gospel, three times in Mark’s gospel, once in Luke’s gospel and once in James’ epistle.

Gehenna was a literal place also known as “the valley of the children of Hinnom”.

2 KINGS 23:10, 14

2 Kings 23 (KJV)

23:10 And he [Josiah] defiled Topheth, which is in the **valley of the children of Hinnom**, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech.

23:14 And he [Josiah] brake in pieces the images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with the bones of men.

When Josiah purged the wickedness from Gehenna, it was no longer a sacred place for Molech where children were sacrificed in the fire, but it became the local rubbish dump.

Dead animals were thrown into the fires of Gehenna.

The dead bodies of criminals who were not permitted to receive a proper burial were thrown into Gehenna.

Isaiah 66 confirms that it is corpses cast into Gehenna, which refutes the notion of these people being conscious in the fire.

ISAIAH 66:24

Isaiah 66 (KJV)

66:24 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.

To prevent disease from spreading, the fires were kept burning. Whatever wasn't consumed by the fire was consumed by worms.

CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM

Matthew 8 (KJV)

8:12 But the **children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness**: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Who are the children of the Kingdom? Most professing Bible-believing Christians would say that all believers are children of the kingdom.

The same people also believe that the outer darkness is Hell. How can believers be cast into Hell?

The children of the kingdom to are Israel and being “cast into outer darkness” is exile from the earthly millennial kingdom as a judgment – NOT losing the gift of resurrection life. These people are not being cast into to Hell.

MATTHEW 5:22

Matthew 5:22 (KJV)

But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of **hell fire**.

Matthew 5:22 (FAA)

but I say to you that everyone who becomes angry with his brother without reason will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, 'Raka' shall be liable to the Sanhedrin *council*, and whoever says, 'You fool' will be liable to fiery **Gehenna**.

The Sanhedrin had the authority to invoke the death penalty and to prevent a proper burial by ordering the criminal's body thrown into Gehenna.

This is not a judgment determining one's eternal state – if it were, it certainly wouldn't be under the authority of the Sanhedrin.

MATTHEW 5:29 / MARK 9:47

Matthew 5:29 (Mark 9:47) (KJV)

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into **hell**.

Matthew 5:29 (Mark 9:47) (FAA)

And if your right eye ensnares you, pluck it out and throw *it* away, for it is *more* profitable to you that one of your organs should perish than that your whole body should be thrown into **Gehenna**,

These verses advise avoiding a life of crime. For which, if convicted, the person could be judicially executed, and his body dumped in Gehenna.

MATTHEW 10:28 / LUKE 12:5

Matthew 10:28 (Luke 12:5) (KJV)

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in **hell**.

Matthew 10:28 (Luke 12:5) (FAA)

and do not fear those *who* kill the body, but who cannot kill the soul, but fear rather him *who* can destroy both the soul and the body in **Gehenna**.

The Sanhedrin can only kill the body – God can destroy souls.
Again, “kill” and “destroy” conflict with traditional Hell.

If we understand Gehenna to be the local landfill where garbage (including dead bodies) is dumped and destroyed, we will correctly understand these verses.

HADES Ἅδης

HADES

Hades is translated as “hell” 9 times in the King James Bible

“SHEOL” = “HADES”

The Hebrew word for Sheol, consisting of the letters Shin, Het, Lamed, and Mem with a vowel pointing under the Mem.

Hebrew

The Greek word for Hades, consisting of the letters Alpha, Delta, Eta, and Sigma.

Greek

Hades is translated as “hell” nine times in the King James Bible. Once in Matthew’s gospel, twice in Luke’s gospel, twice in Acts, and four times in Revelation.

Hades is the Greek form of the Hebrew word “*sheol*”

We already established in the Old Testament that “*sheol*” is the place of the dead – and not the traditional “Hell”

MATTHEW 11:23 / LUKE 10:15

Matthew 11:23 (Luke 10:15) (KJV)

And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to **hell**: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

Matthew 11:23 (Luke 10:15) (FAA)

And you, Capernaum, you which *have been* exalted up to heaven, you will be brought down to **Hades**, for if the mighty deeds which took place in you had taken place in Sodom, it would have remained *intact* up to this day.

The wickedness of the city will lead to its destruction.

MATTHEW 16:18

Matthew 16:18 (KJV)

...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of **hell** shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 16:18 (FAA)

...upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail over it.

The “gates of Hell”... are not the massive demonic army of demons led by Satan who oppose God and try to prevent people from being saved?
Gates don’t attack. Gates keep things secured.

Christ defeated death, and the grave cannot stop those who believe in Him from being resurrected.

ACTS 2:27 / PSALMS 16:10

Acts 2:27 / Psalm 16:10 (KJV)

For thou wilt not leave my soul in **hell**; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Acts 2:27 / Psalm 16:10 (FAA)

For you will not leave my being in the grave, Nor will you allow your holy *one* to see decay.

God doesn't take anyone out of Hell. This refers to resurrection from the grave.

ACTS 2:31

Acts 2:31 (KJV)

He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in **hell**, neither his flesh did see corruption.

Acts 2:31 (FAA)

foreseeing *this*, he spoke about the resurrection of Christ: that his being was not left in **Hades**, nor did his flesh see decay.

This verse is used to promote a horrible teaching that Christ was suffering in Hell. The so-called Apostles' Creed even says that Christ "descended into hell".

Our savior did not remain dead ***in the grave (Hades)*** and because there was no sin in Him, His body did not decay.

REVELATION – DEATH & HADES

Revelation 1:18 (FAA)

I hold the keys of **death and Hades**.

Revelation 6:8 (FAA)

And there *was* a pallid horse, and he *who was* sitting on it *had the* name of **Death, and Hades** was following him.

Revelation 20:13 (FAA)

And the sea gave *up* the dead in it, and **death and Hades** gave *up* the dead in them, and each *one* was judged according to his works.

The Lord holds the keys of death and the grave. He has conquered death and secured resurrection life for those who believe in Him.

LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN (LUKE 16)

Those who hold to the traditional view of Hell use these verses as the standard by which all other mentions of *Sheol* and *Hades* must be interpreted.

Firstly, the Lord is speaking to the Pharisees. It would be odd for Him to introduce a completely new doctrine by speaking to the Pharisees.

LUKE 16

Luke 16 (FAA)

16:19 Now there was a certain rich man, and he used to wear purple and fine linen, and he feasted luxuriously every day.

16:20 And there was a certain poor man by the name of Lazarus, who had been placed at his gate, covered in sores,

16:21 and he longed to be fed from the crumbs which fell from the table of the rich man; not only that, but the dogs would also come and lick his sores clean.

16:22 Then it came to pass that the poor man died, and he was carried away by angels to **Abraham's bosom**. Then the rich man also died and was buried.

16:23 And when in **Hades** he lifted up his eyes, where he was in torments, he saw Abraham from a distance, and Lazarus in his bosom.

16:24 Then he called and said, 'Father Abraham, have compassion on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering pain in this flame.'

16:25 But Abraham said, 'My child, remember that you received the good things you had in your life, whereas Lazarus likewise bad things. But now he is comforted here, whereas you suffer pain.'

Verse 25 is the key to understanding the passage.

If this passage teaches eternal conscious fiery torment, it is also teaching salvation by poverty.

The rich man is in torment because he had riches in life - Lazarus is not in torment because he was poor in life. Nowhere are we told that Lazarus had faith, or that the rich man didn't.

If we reason this teaching out to its logical conclusion, we shouldn't help those in need because it will prevent them from going to heaven.

Nowhere else in the Bible is Abraham's Bosom mentioned.

Welch's "*Hell, or Pure from the Blood of All Men*", connects this parable to the Parable of the Unjust Steward. These two parables exposed the Pharisees' doctrine and practice of being unjust stewards like the men in the parables.

Salvation by poverty is not the gospel of resurrection life – if it were, there is no need for Christ to have died on the cross - we could save ourselves.

REVELATION 20:14

Revelation 20

20:14 And **death and Hades [hell]** were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

If the Lake of Fire is Hell, How can Hell be cast into Hell? Death and the grave aren't tangible objects.

The Lake of Fire metaphorically represents destruction.

TARTARUS ταρταρόω

2 PETER 2:4

2 Peter 2:4 (KJV)

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to **hell**, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

2 Peter 2:4 (FAA)

For if God did not spare angels who sinned, but consigned *them* to **Tartarus** in chains of underworld gloom under guard and delivered *them* to judgment,

Tartarus is translated as “hell” only once in the King James Bible and that is in 2 Peter 2:4:

This refers to the prison holding the angels who sinned.

THE APOSTLE PAUL

Paul never mentions Hell.

In 14 epistles, he never warned anyone of the eternal fiery conscious torment awaiting those who reject God. He mentions judgment (Romans 6:23, the wages of sin is death), but never warns anyone about the traditional Hell.

ACTS 20

Acts 20 (KJV)

20:20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,

20:26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

20:27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Paul “**did not keep back anything profitable**” from them. He declared “**the whole will of God**” to them.

But no mention of Hell

I CORINTHIANS 15:55

I Corinthians 15 (KJV)

15:55 O death, where is thy sting? O **grave [Hades]**, where is thy victory?

Hades is the grave, place of the dead.

PAUL VS. MATTHEW

| Epistles | Gehenna (hell fire) | Fire | Torment | Hell (<i>hades</i>) | Ever- lasting punish- ment | Gnashing of teeth |
|----------|------------------------|----------------|---------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Gal. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1 Thess. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 Thess. | - | 1:8 | - | - | - | - |
| 1 Cor. | - | - | - | 15:55 | - | - |
| 2 Cor. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Rom. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Eph. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Phil. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Col. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1 Tim. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 Tim. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Titus | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Phile. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Heb. | - | 10:27 12:29 | - | - | - | - |

Welch chart comparing the terms in Matthew with Paul's epistles.

The following words and phrases used in Matthew: *Gehenna (hell fire)*, *Fire*, *Torment*, *Hell (Hades)*, *Everlasting punishment*, and *gnashing of teeth* are scarce in Paul's epistles – only four mentions in total.

PAUL VS. MATTHEW

2 Thessalonians 1 (KJV)

1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 10 (KJV)

10:27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Hebrews 12 (KJV)

12:29 For our God is a consuming fire.

The fire in these verses delivers destruction, it devours and consumes, it does not torture endlessly.

Paul never referenced Gehenna, Torment, Everlasting punishment, or Gnashing of teeth.

MATTHEW 25 & EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

MATTHEW 24:3

Matthew 24 (KJV)

24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

The information the Lord is about to share with His disciples pertains to the end of the age – the Tribulation and Christ’s return. These are all future events.

MATTHEW 25

Matthew 25 (KJV)

25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

25:32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

25:46 (FAA) And these will go away to age-abiding punishment, but the righteous to age-abiding life.”

This is a judgment of nations, not individuals and it takes place when Christ returns. It has to do with the place of these nations in the millennial kingdom.

The gospel of resurrection life – the free gift of salvation only received by faith in the finished work of Christ – is NOT what is preached here.

To believe this passage refers to individual salvation, one must believe that salvation is granted to individuals solely based on one’s treatment of the Jews. Which, like in Luke 16, does not require Christ’s death and resurrection. We can save ourselves - Nonsense!

CLOSING

SUMMARY

- Hell is not taught anywhere in the Old Testament.
- The Hebrew word Sheol (grave/underworld) is a better choice of words to represent the state of the dead.
- No one was ever warned of suffering eternal conscious fiery torment in the afterlife for rejecting God.

SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

- Hell is not taught in the New Testament
- Hades is the Greek word for Sheol (grave);
- Gehenna was the local garbage dump
- Tartarus is a prison for fallen angels.
- The Apostle Paul never warned anyone about suffering eternal conscious fiery torment in the afterlife for rejecting God.

SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

***BUT WHAT IF I'M
WRONG?...***

If I am wrong about Hell, so be it. Unbelievers still face destruction - I'm not a universalist falsely promising Heaven to unbelievers.

SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

BUT WHAT IF I'M RIGHT?...

Christians who teach the traditional view of Hell are, albeit unwittingly, committing the greatest character assassination imaginable against our Creator, Redeemer, and Lord by accusing the God, who loved us enough to send His Son to die for us, of torturing people for all of eternity.

People's reputations are ruined by false accusations – think of what God has been falsely accused of for centuries.

Unbelievers ask the tough question, “How can a loving God send people to eternity in Hell?”

Praise the Lord that we can respond with encouragement by telling them that **He doesn't.**

