

# You Pick It; I'll Preach It

## *Is Hell Real?*

- Introduction:
1. In recent years, preachers have dropped the motive of fear from their preaching and have excluded the word "Hell" from their vocabulary.
  2. Note some actual church ads (taken from "Ashamed of the Gospel" by John MacArthur).
    - a. "There is no fire and brimstone here. No Bible thumping. Just practical, witty messages."
    - b. "Services here have an informal feeling. You won't hear people threatened with hell or referred to as sinners. The goal is to make them feel welcome, not drive them away."
    - c. "As with all clergymen, our preacher's answer is God – but he slips Him in at the end, and even then doesn't get heavy. No ranting, no raving. No fire, no brimstone. He doesn't even use the H-word."
    - d. "The sermons here are relevant, upbeat, and best of all, short. You won't hear a lot of preaching about sin and demnation ad hell fire. Preaching here doesn't sound like preaching. It is sophisticated, urbane, and friendly talk. It breaks all stereotypes."
  2. From the above ads, we see that the philosophy of many people concerning preaching is to be clever, informal, positive, brief, and never, never use the H-word.
  3. While this may represent what many believe about Hell today, let's look at what the Bible says about Hell.

### I. A Description of Hell

- A. Hell Is Eternal
  1. (Matthew 25:46).
  2. Heaven and Hell are both mentioned in this passage and they are both said to be eternal.
  3. When God made you a living spirit, you became immortal. No living being will ever cease to exist.
  4. (Mark 9:44).
- B. Hell Is A Place Of Darkness
  1. (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 13; Matthew 25:30).
  2. Note the progression...not just darkness, but the blackness of darkness...not just the blackness of darkness, but outer darkness.
  3. Hell is the place farthest removed from light – God is light, therefore, God will not be in Hell with the lost.
  4. There will be no one who will listen to your prayers, or to hear you as you scream for mercy.
  5. Darkness is terrifying – we all seek the security of light.

- C. Hell Is A Place Of Fire
  1. (Matthew 13:42) – a furnace of fire.
  2. (Matthew 25:41) – everlasting fire.
  3. (Mark 9:44-45) – the fire is not quenched
  4. (Revelation 20:10) – fire and brimstone
  5. (Revelation 20:15) – a lake of fire.
  6. In all likelihood, the description of Hell and Heaven for that matter, do not exhaust the horror and the beauty of it.
- D. Hell Is A Place Of Pain With No Relief
  1. (Matthew 25:30) – There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
  2. (Revelation 14:11) - There is no rest day or night.
- E. Hell Is A Place That Is Worse For Some Than Others
  1. (Matthew 11:21-24).
  2. (Luke 12:47-48).
  3. If I were to die out of Christ, I would much rather die in a far away land that had never heard of Christ, then I would in the United States.
- F. Hell Is A Place Of No Hope
  - A. Its punishment is everlasting (Matthew 25:46).
  - B. Hell simply has no end, God is not present to hear your cries, thus Dante correctly stated in his famous poem “The Inferno” that the sign above Hell’s gate ought to read “Those who enter this door leave all hope behind.”

## II. The Reality Of Hell

- A. According to a Harris Poll, 89% of Americans believe in Heaven and only 31% believe in Hell.
- B. So we ask the question, “Is Hell is real.”
- B. Either it is real or the Bible is untrustworthy (Matthew 13:42; 25:46; Mark 9:43-44; Jude 13; 2 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 20:10-15, etc.).
- C. Jesus spoke more about Hell than any other person in the Bible.
- D. People sometimes say they can’t believe in a God who allows Hell to exist.
  1. On the other hand, if one believes in justice, he cannot conceive of a God who doesn’t punish the wicked.
- E. Others object to Hell because they say it isn’t fair to “infinitely punish someone for finite actions.”
  1. However, such an argument is shallow when one considers the flip-side of this argument.
  2. Would we object to the existence of Heaven because it’s not fair to “infinitely reward someone for finite actions?”
  3. There seems to be a double standard here.

- Conclusion:
1. The information God has given us about Hell has been so that you can make a responsible choice concerning where you will live eternally.
  2. Note that I said your eternity is your “choice.”
  3. If you go to Hell, it will be because you chose that for yourself.
  4. In view of the uncertainty of life, and the certainty of the judgment, why don’t you choose Heaven for yourself this morning?

# You Pick It; I'll Preach It

## *What Do We Know About Angels & Demons?*

- Introduction:
1. Angels have become very popular in recent years.
    - a. "AngelWatch" bi-monthly newsletter.
    - b. "Angels: God's Secret Agents" by Billy Graham.
    - c. "It's A Wonderful Life," "Angels In The Outfield," "Highway To Heaven..."
  2. Unfortunately, much of the information people have today about angels is based more on fiction than fact.
  3. Why should we study angels?
    - a. It is a biblical topic (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
    - b. They are interested in us (Luke 15:7,10; 1 Peter 1:10-12).
    - c. We will someday be like them (Matthew 22:29-30).
  4. Let us examine some of the facts that the Bible reveals to us about angels and demons, but at the same respect the silence of the Scriptures on this subject.
    - a. Our curiosity may be far greater than God's revelation.
    - b. It's easy to speculate, but such is not helpful if we wish to know that the Bible says.
    - c. Let us, with this subject, as well as all subjects to be content with what God has revealed.
    - d. (Deuteronomy 29:29) The secret things belong to God.

### **I. The Origin And Nature Of Angels**

- A. The Origin.
  1. They were created (Psalm 148:1-5; Nehemiah 9:6).
  2. They were created before the earth was created (Job 38:4-7).
  3. They are a part of God's family in heaven (Ephesians 3:15).
- B. The Nature.
  1. They are a higher order than man, but lower than God (Psalm 8:5; Heb. 2:7).
  2. They have super-human knowledge, but are not omniscient (Mark 13:32; 1 Peter 1:10-12; Matthew 24:36).
  3. They have super-human strength, but are not omnipotent (Ps. 103:20; 2 Samuel 24:15-17).
  4. They have super-human speed, but are not omnipresent (Dan. 9:20-23).
  5. They are innumerable (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 5:11).
  6. They are without marriage (Matthew 22:30).
  7. They have a special interest in our salvation (Luke 2:13-14; 15:10; 1 Pet. 1:10-12).
  8. The form of angels vary, taking whatever form God desires for them (Exodus 3:2; Hebrews 1:7; Genesis 18:1-2; 2 Kings 6:15-17).

9. There is rank among angels
  - a. Archangels (Jude 9).
  - b. Cherubim (Ezekiel 41:18).
  - c. Seraphim (Isaiah 6:3).
10. They have the ability to choose between right and wrong (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6).

## II. The Activity Of Angels

- A. Their Present Activity.
  1. They worship God (Revelation 5:11-14).
  2. They are ministers of God's providence (Ps. 34:4-7; Hebrews 1:14).
  3. They are possessed by children (Matthew 18:10).
  4. They rejoice at a sinner's repentance (Luke 15:10).
  5. They carry the spirits of the deceased into Hades (Luke 16:22).
- B. Their Future Activity.
  1. They will accompany Christ at His return (Matthew 16:27).
  2. They will announce His coming (1 Thess. 4:16).
  3. They will separate the wicked from the righteous (Matthew 13:41-42).
  4. They will execute judgment (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8).

## III. The Nature Of Demons

- A. The subject of demons has gained popularity since William Blatty's novel, "The Exorcist."
  1. Since that time there have been many similar movies – "Rosemary's Baby," "The Omen," "Amnityville Horror.."
- B. There are five major views concerning the nature of demons.
  1. They were a Pre-Adamic race.
    - a. Purely speculation, no scriptural evidence (Genesis 1:1-2).
  2. They were the offspring of Angels and women.
    - a. (Genesis 6:1-4).
    - b. Jesus said Angels are not given in marriage (Mark 12:25).
    - c. The "sons of God" in this context refer to godly men, not angels.
  3. Mental Illness.
    - a. This view denies the spirit world.
    - b. Demonic possession is contrasted with diseases (Mt. 4:24; Luke 4:40-41).
  4. They are departed spirits of wicked men.
    - a. Luke 16 teaches that the spirit of deceased people cannot return unless God allows an exception (1 Sam. 28:3-25; Luke 16:24-31).
  5. They are fallen angels.
    - a. (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4).
- C. The fact of the matter is simply this: God does not specifically tell us what demons were, other than the fact they were "unclean spirits."
- D. They seem to abruptly appear on the scene during the time of Jesus, and there

simply is no doctrinal development as to their origin.

#### **IV. Some Things We Can Know And Learn From Demons**

- A. Consider these truths from (Mt. 8:28-32; Mk. 5:1-13; Lk. 8:26-35).
  - 1. They knew who Jesus was.
  - 2. They had super-human strength.
  - 3. They had the power to take over a person.
  - 4. They were ordained for punishment, and they knew it.
- B. They demonstrate that there is a spirit world.
- C. Demons allowed Jesus to demonstrate his power over them.
  - 1. Because they are arguably not mentioned in the O.T., one might conclude that they were “set loose” on man to demonstrate Jesus’ power over them (Luke 11:20).
  - 2. Since their arrival coincided with the arrival of Jesus and the power to overthrow them, it would seem logical that when Jesus and the power to overthrow them was gone, they too would be gone.
  - 3. It seems hard to believe that God would leave the world at such a disadvantage.
- D. The power to cast out demons was given to the apostles of Jesus (Mk. 16:17-20).

- Conclusion:
- 1. There are so many questions to which we simply do not have answers at this time, thus we need to avoid speculative thinking the genders strife (1 Corinthians 4:6).
  - 2. Just as the angels chose to obey or disobey God, we humans have the same choice, and will share in the same destiny, whether Heaven or Hell.