

Hell Fire

HELL! The Future Home of the Wicked?

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Update -- 04-16-2011: Since having written this article and looking into things a little deeper I felt it necessary to do an update in clarifying the understanding I now have concerning the "soul", and the "spirit" or "spirits" of men. I must thank one of my readers for this new insight. Also, because of being pushed by another I have expanded the understanding of the "parable" Lazarus and the Rich Man. Thank you for sharpening me and helping me to a better understanding. Also, this is not an argument concerning the Holy Spirit and its connection with believers.

This article concerning "hell" is arguing against the teachings of the majority of works, large and small, teaching the immortality of man – even the wicked continue to life and have conscious life after death, which a contradiction in and of itself. This article proposes the biblical concept that "hell" and "hell fire" is not a place of "life". This is not an argument about the term SPIRIT. The use of the term "spirit" is context driven. Like the term "hell" is misused and misapplied due to not understanding that the English translators used the single English term, "hell" for three (four) different meanings and terms used in the Hebrew and Greek. The same is true in the use of the single English term for "spirit" (ghost, in earlier versions) in place of three different meanings found in the original languages from which the English translated the Scriptures.

The bias received from the Mother Church of Rome concerning the pagan doctrines of Heaven, Hell and Purgatory influenced the English translators in their thinking and turned the Biblical concept of hell, hell fire into a single concept – a place of torture for all eternity.

I want to make it clear that this, then, is not a treatment concerning the "spirit" of man, the spirit of animals or the Spirit of God. This is a discussion into whether or not there exists a place where the "spirits" of the evil dead go to "live".

Like the single term in English used to define three different place, we have a single term attempting to define three different meanings for "soul", this term being intermingled and used in place of the terms for "body", "spirit" and the dead -- a living soul, an eternal soul, and a dead soul, etc. This present study, however, is about HELL and if the wicked really do go to a place to live, even though they are dead? I do admit, however, this article will step on some toes and will also challenge even the concept held by the main Christian communities concerning not only Hell, or Hell Fire, but of the Spirit as well, after all, the greater mass of Christian are taught and believe dead spirits live, not later but now, and that dead relatives are alive in Heaven, with a few living in Hell – this article will challenge that concept as a non-biblical teaching, a teaching brought into the Church from the pagan Romans and Greeks – a pagan concept Daunte Alighieri's work, called the Divine Comedy immortalized for the Roman Church and culture around the 12th century.

It is interesting how this writing was embraced by the Roman Church. Daunte had put into words a concept the Mother Church taught and Daunte turned into a Poem (?). It is interesting, also, that this book, or writing of the "Inferno" (Hell) is called "divine" and a "comedy". It is about Daunte's journey through "hell". Somehow this legitimized the Church's teaching concerning hell, purgatory, and heaven. The Roman Church considers Daunte a literary hero, but what if what Daunte wrote really was a "comedy", what if he really was making fun? I see his work more of a religious slap in the face, a way of expressing himself without getting burned at the stake. Now, because "hell" is seen as a place very similar to what Daunte, in his Devine Comedy, scripture has to get twisted about and a slant

in biased opinions in the teachings of Scripture continue to support such a "Comedy" -- "Divine" or not.

To unscramble this is not difficult, really, it is difficult, however, to take what has been taught as truth for so long and unravel what the mind has accepted as truth to reveal a simple deception. Then there is the idea that always comes to mind, "Is it possible everyone is wrong, and only a few really see this?"

(Mat 7:13-14) Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. NIV

Those are the words of our Savior, YaHshua, and according to Him we are on more sure ground to question the majority and the way they are headed as opposed to a minority opinion. This is not to say the majority is always wrong, but should be questioned, especially if it has something to do with our Salvation. Is this a salvational issue? Perhaps not, but if you accept without question one error in a Christian teaching then how many others are you willing to accepted, perhaps to the accepting of "another gospel" and the preaching of "another savior"?

(Gal 1:6) I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel--

Paul saw this very thing happening in his day with the first New Covenant Church and he did not approve and neither should we. With that said, let's have a look at this concept and why it is damaging to the Biblical doctrines and the truth our Savior taught and His Apostles taught.

Hell Fire and Hell

Why start with Hell as the first basic doctrine? First, this is assuming the reader is a professing Christian, a follower of the Christ, a follower of Yahshua or, at least, a follower and believer of the Bible. From this point it is also assumed that the doctrine of the Christ (Messiah) does not need to be taught – you have either accepted the Christ (Messiah) of the Holy Bible or you have not. Okay, maybe you are still on the fence but searching -- then it is you I'm writing to. Hell is a definite place -- but wait -- let's not get ahead of ourselves. Keep reading, talk back if you want, but please

continue. For some, a few, this may be old stuff and this will be a nice refresher, but for others this may be a whole new experience from what your church or your local minister has been teaching you and your children.

Hell A Real Place?

The first thing we need to look at concerning “hell” is to answer the question, is it a real place? And the answer is, yes it is -- It is three places, actually. That’s right, three separate places. When the Messiah or one of the Apostles made mention of this place called “hell” they had a definite image in mind and they did not have to explain which image to their listeners because the teaching of the had a different word for each of the three different *hells* – in Greek. In the Hebrew there was only one *hell* and depending on the audience being spoken to would determine the language used to describe which hell.

The concept of a Hell-Fire where all the fun people are sent to *live* is not a concept of your Bible. Yes, there is a place where the souls of those dead go. The Saints go to one place and others to another. Hey, wait a minute, you might shout; I thought you just said there “ain't no place like Hell”. Right, and I know, this can be confusing but once you grasp the concept of the word “hell”, as used in scripture, you will get it. Scripture has three very different meanings for the term “hell” as used in the English language. Once you understand these three different meanings it should become clear.

Hell #1 – gehenna or hell fire – it is this Hell we will deal with primarily

Hell #2 – hades or the grave – the Hebrew, sheol

Hell #3 – Tartaros or the abyss

The word we use for “hell”, in the English speaking world, is actually three separate words in the Greek, each having a specific meaning so the audience always knew which of the *three* “hells” was being referred to,

however, this was for the Greek speaking audience, the Jews, speaking Aramaic, and a later form of Hebrew (modern Hebrew was not the language of Israel) had no such problems with our Lord's teaching concerning what "hell" was and wasn't, as they, the Pharisees, taught that you died and went to the grave (*one of the Hells*) to await the resurrection. The other religious party, the Sadducees, believed in no resurrection, no returning from the grave, or shoal, the place of the dead.

There were some, believing in a resurrection and others that the grave was the last resting place – this was the big argument between the two main Jewish religious parties -- Pharisees and the Sadducees. So, when YaHshua spoke about death and hell (the grave) they might argue his meaning concerning the resurrection but neither side mistook His teaching about going to Heaven. The resurrection for the Pharisee meant a literal raising of the flesh back to life on earth. The Sadducees believed there was not resurrection, and from there we know they never taught going to Heaven. Only the Christians, since around 400AD teach a "life in Hell, where the wicked dead go. A kind of oxymoron – the dead living – and on this the later Christians, after the first century have built a doctrine?

The Old English translators, being very knowledgeable in Greek, however, for some reason, missed this and failed in presenting to the readers the correct image, or mind pictures of *which* "hell" the Messiah spoke and later Greek writers tried to pass on to the understanding of the Greek mind. My guess is, and it is only a guess, as I have no idea what the translators, commissioned by the King, King James, had for their reason in using a single English word, *hell*, for all three different meanings from the Greek? My guess is this: The Christian leadership and scholars of the day had already accepted a false doctrine concerning this "fiery" place of torment and suffering -- the Hell Fire of pagan theology. Some may have even reasoned that to teach the "hell fire" as the destination of the damned would be a good thing in order to keep the "commoners" under the influence of the Bible -- *scare them to Christ*. The end justifies the means, so to speak. Let the masses believe the lie in order to keep them focused on

our view of the God of the Bible, and, of course, keeping the people under their authority by this fear tactic... That may be the way it started out but after centuries of building on this lie it has become a truth for many and is still a fearful threat – be good, stay loyal to the church or go to the place of devils and demons, of torture and pain – Hell Fire! We will look at the three different “hells” the Bible mentions and we will see that not everything is as hellish as one might think.

Hell Fire:

Strong’s Greek Dictionary, G1067 – *geenna*

gheh'-en-nah

Of Hebrew origin ([[H1516](#)] and [[H2011](#)]); *valley of* (the son of) *Hinnom*; *gehenna* (or *Ge-Hinnom*), a valley of Jerusalem, used (figuratively) as a name for the place (or state) of everlasting punishment: - hell.

Hell fire, “gehenna fire” why start with gehenna? Because this is the first of the three “hells” mentioned by our Savior YaHshua, besides, it is the one everyone fears the most and is the most twisted in its understanding. The first simple observation in the Strong’s definition is the “*place of everlasting punishment*”. Everlasting means “forever”, and what is being dead “forever” in a fire mean? It means you never come back from it, it is a fire from which you do not return – it does not say you live but die, are burned up forever with not more life, no more possibility of resurrection. Those in the other “hell”, the “grave” hell will be resurrected and do have the possibility of living again, but, as you will see, all those tossed into this “gehenna” hell will never live again. It is not “forever” or “everlasting” life in this hell fire, it is everlasting death, burned up to be no more.

The concept or threat of living in eternal torment in a fiery place *forever* as some kind of immortal is not a true Biblical teaching.

Actually, looking at the majority of Evangelical Christians it doesn’t really seem that they fear this as much as their ancestors did, the idea of going to

the “hell fire”, living forever in torment, with demons torturing you day and night does not really compute in modern thinking. Let’s take a closer look at this “hell fire”, this place where the wicked are to live *forever* in burning flames -- or do you? Well, I don’t mean “you” particularly but the wicked; then again, later you will see how we are all headed for hell, well, one or the other hells, as you will see.

In the Greek, the text that most Biblical scholars recognize as the authorized language for the New Testament, we see that this “hell fire” mentioned first in Matthew 5:22, “...and whosoever shall say, *Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire*, is a pretty strong warning, just for calling someone an idiot. Seems to me this “hell fire”, this “gehenna” should be reserved for the likes of a Hitler or a Charles Manson, not for merely calling someone a “fool”. Never the less this is what our Savior warned. The Greek word in this verse is “gehenna” – Identified in the Strong’s Greek Dictionary as a real place, and actual geographical location is given. – the valley of Hinnom and to be more specific this valley is located right alongside of Jerusalem, called the Kidron valley today. This deep narrow valley had been used as the city garbage dump. Most cities today have such a place located somewhere close by where the garbage is collected from the local residence, dumped and *burned* – that would be your local gehenna, or hell, not some place in the center of the earth. I remember when the local dumps (gehenna) always had smoke rising from the piles and piles of garbage. It was the practice back in the day to burn the refuse, the garbage and waste -- it was the *gehenna fire* outside of every city continually burning. Today, however, these gehenna fires have been extinguished in most modern cultures and the garbage is now buried instead of burned, so it moves from a gehenna fire to a hades, or grave, being a place things are buried. If you go to a modern dump you can dig things up but if you go to the old dumps where things were burned up all you get are ashes – get it?

The garbage dump was a place outside the city of Jerusalem in the Valley of Hinnom where more than just trash was disposed in those days. Not

trash only but bodies of diseased animals and even executed criminals if no one came forward to pay for a burial. This is also a place where the people of Israel, at their most religious period of time as a nation worshipping every god or fad god possible, also engaged in the worship of Molech the god of fire, offering up to him their first born, burning them in the fire of Molech, and where was this place where these very religious people sacrificed to Molech? The valley of G-Hinnom. YaHshua used this imagery to make his point and from this *point* no one of that day thought He was talking about living in the city bump but rather a place where things, even bodies of people and children of the past had been are burned up, like so much trash, not a place of the living but of the dead – not the living dead, not zombies – the people hearing His words knew what he meant, it was a place of final destruction, of ashes.

See how the picture changes when we understand what the Hell Fire YaHshua spoke of is understood? Continuing on let's see what else the Messiah had to say about this "Hell fire" (gehenna).

(Mat 5:29) "And if thy 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 should be cast into hell (Gehenna)"

(Mar 9:43) And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for you to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell (gehenna), into the fire that never shall be quenched:

(note: the suggestion is not to literally mutilate yourself, but in a spiritual sense – it may become necessary to separate yourself, or the cutting off of a relationship, whether of a personal nature or from a group unity that is leading you away from the truth – we each have a personal responsibility concerning our own personal "salvation" – Php 2:12)

Notice that the word *perish* is not a continued type of life after being tossed into *hell* – *this Hell means to perish, not to live*. This is the same "hell" mentioned previously, remember, the garbage dump analogy. In the Jewish dialect of Yiddish this place is called *Gehinnam*, the same place the

English translators called “hell” – they forgot to capitalize the first letter, isn’t that the first rule of thumb for place names. The English Hell, in this case, is the same as the Valley of Hinnom, or Gehinnam. The Messiah is suggesting that if a member is doing damage to the body it should be cut off, or cut out and thrown into the valley of Gehinnam, the place known as the Gehinnam (Hinnom) fire – Hell Fire -- where the offending part will be consumed – it will perish, not live on.

This lesson from our Savior is not about you poking your eye out for looking but about the body of believers removing offending members, or even a single member remove themselves from a rotting body. Although, in the physical realm we do see this practice of cutting cancerous limbs from our bodies, by surgeons, of course, and no one suggests these cancerous limbs or tumors go on living somewhere else, do they? I know there is a lot that can be said about this but for now let’s stay on the path of determining, rather, defining just what the “basic doctrine” of hell *should* be.

Would anyone think that if you were to cut off your hand or to pluck your eye out and throw it into the “hell fire”, that “gehenna”, and your hand or eye would then be tormented day and night by the demons of Satan? Of course not, to be thrown into the “gehenna fire” is to be destroyed permanently -- to be consumed by the fire of the garbage pit – this is the lesson YaHshua was making, not a doctrine about living on in a Hell of torment. Those listening to the Messiah knew exactly where and what He was talking about, as mentioned before. The simple logic here explains itself. In verse 29 and 30, *perish* means to be consumed fully – it in no way suggests a continuing life in pain and torment. The modern concept of Hell Fire is from another source perpetuated by the bias of translators having accepted a pagan concept as truth and letting that leak into translations of our Bible and then reinforced by preachers and teachers

From a greater majority of Christian teachers and lay people accepting the idea that *hell fire* is a place the wicked go to *live* in pain and torment goes along, part and parcel with the original lie, a lie presented from the

beginning, "... *you shall not die*" (Genesis 3:4), and this lie is from the lips of Satan when he confronted Eve. He called the Creator a liar and told Eve that there would be no death. When she disobeyed YaHWeH she did not die so she turned to Adam and he too disobeyed and took the forbidden fruit and ate. You have to wonder just when did they figure out they had been lied to and that, yes, they would die – immortality had been taken from them. Satan's lie has been passed down from the beginning and is still being taught today. Our Savior contradicts Satan by telling us that the corrupt will *perish* in Hell (the grave), not live on.

Perish: Strong's #622 "...*to destroy fully*". And the Messiah used this word, to "*fully destroy*" not once did He say this, but twice – verses 29 & 30 of Matthew chapter 5 our Lord uses the word "perish" indicating anything thrown into "hell" is destroyed, it perishes, it does not live on.

There it is the "hell fire" doctrine a pagan concept exploded. It is not a doctrine of life after death in an eternal torment, but it is a doctrine of absolute destruction. The destruction of the things disposed of in the garbage dump of "gehenna". Even the Strong's Greek Dictionary has an error in this definition of what "gehenna" is. Our Lord clearly made the point that anything thrown into this place, this "gehenna" would perish but in some dictionaries, like the Strong's a secondary definition is given, "...a place of everlasting punishment", this, however is wrong and is only in the minds of men. Our Lord, YaHshua, said "gehenna", this "hell fire" was a place of refuse, parts and pieces of useless things disposed of, in the fire of the garbage dump, not an everlasting place of the living dead. Men may want to see it differently but we should stay with what our Lord instructs us.

Still not enough, still not convinced

I know, I know, what about the "lake of fire", and what about the rich man calling up to the poor man, Lazarus, from the pits of *hell*. We will be covering those in a little bit but first we need to understand the meaning of what is actually said and to understand the concept of what *heaven and hell*

meant in the first century. Yes, there is a *hell fire* but this is a fire from which there is no return. Do you think this does not apply to you, that “hell fire” is for those sinners outside of the body of the Christ? You had better think again. Read verse 22 again, “...*anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell*” (NIV). Which of us has never, ever, said this? How many times have you heard yourself say, “Look at that idiot”, or remark, “Now that person is an idiot” or “What a fool he is”? Please, our Savior YaHshua said, “...*in danger of the fire of hell ...*”. It is not the making of such a remark you are going to *hell*, it is a warning to watch what you say, or do next – in *danger of*, like peering over the cliff, toes on the edge, you can still backup, but this warning makes it very serious, watch your words and your judgments toward others. You get the point, I’m sure. But wait there is more in clarifying the “*fires of hell*” in you Bible.

Matthew 10:28 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. KJV

Again we see the suggestion that the “hell” spoken of is a type of *destruction* not a continuing of life in torment. See the word “*destroy*”? This is the same exact word as “*perish*” used in previous verses recording the words of our Savior, YaHshua, and defined in the Strong’s Greek Dictionary, #622—*to destroy fully*. A second witness to this definition is found in, “Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of the Old and New Testaments”, pages 467-468, under *Perish*, “...*utterly perishing*”. It has a much longer definition and coverage of this term but the short of it is “*to utterly perish, to be completely destroyed*”. This verse in Matthew 10 covers a lot of territory: The *soul*, as used here apparently is not “immortal” it can be destroyed as well as the *body*-- in hell. Again, according to our Lord, the body and the soul can be destroyed.

What is unique about the above verse, remember, a direct quote of the Messiah, is the addition of another element -- apart from the body -- the *soul* -- and it appears this *soul* can also be put in this “hell fire” of total destruction, to perish. What we are being told is that not only will this destroying fire consume the *body* but it is also capable of the total

destruction of your *soul*, your spirit, so the context appears to be saying just that – this is a method controlled by our Creator not Satan – Satan may be able to destroy the flesh but only our Creator can destroy our Spirit as well – so, who should we fear? Our Creator and God is capable, also, of restoring the dead, some to judgment some to everlasting life. Our Creator and God is in control, make no mistake, it is by His mercy eternal life has been offered to those accepting His Son, YaHshua. Life is not offered to the wicked only their destruction.

In this created “gehenna” even your life force, apart from your physical body, can be destroyed. Is it the “hell fire” that does this? No, it is the One that can use it for that purpose, the one who will create this “hell fire”, the “gehenna” mentioned by YaHshua was only as a comparison because the people understood fully what this meant because the valley of “gehenna” was the place outside of the city gates, the local garbage dump.

We can see Satan has the power to destroy us physically and he has set about attempting to destroy God’s people over the past centuries from the beginning. Satan has made it his goal to destroy as many of God’s people as possible but he does not have the power to take your spirit, your very soul – only our Creator God has that power, and our Creator will prepare a final destruction for the wicked and for Satan in a place called the “Lake of Fire” which is to be prepared for this purpose but does not yet exist --

(Mat 25:41) 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:

With this truth we should not fear what Satan can do to us, or what men can do, by comparison, but we should have a healthy fear the One that has the power to destroy us totally, both body and spirit, by the “fire of total destruction” and this is to be a “fire prepared” and used to totally destroy those separated from the sheep – the final judgment. We are told this “fire”, this “gehenna” is prepared for the Devil and his angels, but not only them but those “cursed” -- let’s read it again --

(Mat 25:41) Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

(Rev 20:14) And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

The context from Revelation 20 makes plain that the events are still in the future, for a time called the Judgment. This second death is the final decision of who will go on into eternity and who will suffer the final destruction of both flesh and spirit -- *body and soul*. The timing of this is not when you or a wicked person, like Hitler dies. Hitler is not in some hot place being tortured or having fun torturing other, no, he is dead waiting on this coming time of Judgment to be raised back to life to face the second death, a death from which there is no return.

Other Verses

Other verses that use this "gehenna hell" – Mathew 23:15; 23:33; James 3:6

(Mat 23:15) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

Understanding the previous verse you know this verse not saying "children live in hell", but that it is possible for the teachers of the people to actually lead converts to be followers headed for the "hell fire" of final destruction, being led away from life. Notice -- Scribes or authors, writers of books and then the Pharisees, the preachers and teachers of the people, turning their converts toward a path of destruction. The Christians are not immune from this warning by our Savior. There is a personal responsibility here – the believer is to sooner or later take the study of the Word and the following of YaHshua, and the growing in knowledge of Him to themselves.

The believer must take YaHshua as their Head Master, not some man or men. What happens is a convert becomes a follower of someone telling

them what they want to hear or makes them feel comfortable or feel good about themselves, and that is good enough, they do not bother proving what is right or wrong. It is a case of having preachers, teachers, and ministers you deserve, not necessarily those you should be listening to. Look at the prophets of the Old Testament, nearly all of them were rejected, called negative people, with nothing good to say, always threatening bad things, etc., etc., and it is no different today. There are people willingly following the soothsayers, setting up to themselves teachers telling them what they want to hear *not* what they should hear and becoming a child headed for the fire, along with their chosen teachers.

(Mat 23:33) You serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?

(Jas 3:6) And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

There is a "fire", an eternal fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels, please read again and again – this is a place to be prepared, it is not a place Satan rules over to torture the dead.

"Then He will say to those on his left, Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:41 NIV

A Second Hell (Hades – Strong's G86 – *the grave*)

We have covered the first "hell", the *hell fire*, the hell of destruction, the "gehenna" which will be the final place for the wicked where they will perish. It is also the place Satan and his angels (demons and devils) are tossed. Perhaps it is they that will live in eternal torment, but for man this place will be the final death, not life, and the destruction of all those cursed and they will be no more.

Remember the English translators used a single term, hell, for three different meanings and if we patiently pick dig into each meaning in the

Greek, and the Hebrew we will see how far off the mark the Christian Church is in their teachings concerning Heaven and Hell.

Our next use of the English word “hell” is found in Matthew 11:23, “...*And you, Capernaum, which are exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell:*” This “hell” is the Greek “hades” and means, simply, the “grave”. This is the place all flesh eventually will eventually go, that is in the natural course of things – we are born in the flesh, we live and continue to degenerated and fall apart until we die and are then placed in hell and that would be the *grave*.

Even our Messiah went to the grave, or “hades”, for three days and three nights (Mat 12:40). In the verse above the Messiah has pronounced the demise of the city of Capernaum. This first century city was considered very modern and up to date, a beautiful city, and *a high minded city*. Being a very intellectual city full of bright and prosperous of people as were many of the surrounding cities and villages they were well educated and able to explain away the miracles the Messiah performed in their midst, to their own satisfaction. They saw no reason to repent because life was good; they had the feeling of immortality and lived in a city that appeared to have an eternal life of its own. Our Messiah, Yahshua, however, told them what He thought of their haughty attitude. If anyone had received signs and wonders it was here, in Capernaum, close to where YaHshua grew up and spent a good deal of time during His ministry, but they refused His message and ridiculed the acts of God. Thus, YaHshua told them they would fall to the grave. In other words they would all go to the *grave* (hell) along with the city. Capernaum died a natural death falling into ruin and decay. The “hell” spoken of here is the “grave” – that place they put you when your physical body dies.

Hades, the Grave

Again turning to the Strong’s Dictionary for this second “hell” –

From [G1](#) (as a negative particle) and [G1492](#); properly *unseen*, that is, "Hades" or the place (state) of departed souls: - grave, hell.

Most people understand that a "departed" loved one is dead and to be buried, and where do we bury the "departed"? In the grave, or, as the Old English used to say, "in hell".

Within the context of what YaHshua is saying we hear Him mention the judgment, that at the time of the judgment it will go better for Sodom than for those in Capernaum. This should be a big hint that the "departed" going to the grave will be brought back for a time of judgment – the resurrection. From this we can see that to be brought down to the grave (hades - hell) does not mean total destruction as does the "gehenna" hell.

We are all going to be brought down to the grave, rich or poor all go to the grave and in the grave are the same, dead. The "grave" where our body resides, even returning to dust, awaiting the judgment day. In this condition the body, the flesh in its natural process degenerating back into dirt, for the most part and try as man might perfect preservation of this soul, or body has failed, only dried up bones and ugly, worm riddled corpse – the departed, in death, are not pretty and are not alive but dead.

The spirit of life returns to our Creator and what He does with it after that we are only given hints – in many ways this spirit is compared to the breath we breathe, for as our Creator breathed into the nostrils of Adam and he became a living soul, so we live as we breathe – perhaps it is this breathe that returns to our Creator? In the *Gehenna hell* the spirit is destroyed but in the *hades hell* the flesh is destroyed but the spirit leaves and returns to the one that gave it.

(Ecc 12:7) Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

We also read about the spirits of the saints held in a place "under the Altar" in Heaven -- you will notice these spirits are not "on" the Alter but "under" it, as if hidden, preserved in a place of safety. By this we see our Heavenly

Father cares for the spirits of all men, especially those of the saints, but it is only the spirits of those slain for the Word of God that we read are in this special place.

(Rev 6:9) And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

These "souls" may not be the same as those seen later standing before the throne, then again maybe they are, but at a later date, released from their position under the Alter, the Resurrected believers?

(Rev 7:9) After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

To get the right picture we need to put this in context and we will see this particular vision concerning the great multitude is not taking place in Heaven but on earth, in the Kingdom of YaHshua established after His return – we see this vision after the 12,000 from each tribe of Israel is marked, and that is happening on earth.

(Rev 7:14-17) And I said unto him, Sir, you know. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and He that sits on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

None of this helps explain the "hades hell" but is of interest when considering the concept of Heaven. It would seem that no flesh is in Heaven and not all spirits are there either, some are held in a prison.

At the end of the thousand year rule of YaHshua on earth we are told the sea gives up its dead. Considering those souls that died in the great flood it would not be impossible to think the prison might be the seas of the earth.

(Rev 20:13) 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.

This verse really says it -- the sea gives up its dead and then hell (*Hades, the grave*) gives up its dead, and "death" too, gives up its dead. This covers everyone that has ever died and gone to hades hell or the grave – a resurrection back to life to face the final judgment. Is someone going to suggest the sea has dead people living in it? Or that those having died and been buried in the soil of this earth are dead but still alive? Not until He brings all that have ever lived back to LIFE do they live again.

The warning to Capernaum was to wake them up to the fact they were not "immortal" and no matter how wonderful life was for them at that time in their history, they were all going to the grave -- and they did -- the City of Capernaum and all of its inhabitants living during Yahshua's flesh and blood days are in the grave, "shalt be brought down to hell" (*hades, the grave*). Read the context concerning Capernaum and you will see the "day of judgment" is mentioned as a future event, an event the people of Capernaum would face alongside Sodom. These are His words, and by them we know Sodom has not faced judgment yet and having not been judged yet how is it most of the Christian teachers teach that Sodom and other wicked people are suffering right now in a hell fire, being tormented day and night by devils and demons? If that were the case then they have already been judged. According to our Lord and according to the Book of Revelation, a revelation from our Lord and our Heavenly Father there is a judgment after the 1,000 year rule of our Messiah, YaHshua.

Revelation 20 Explains it all

Maybe we should look at these events that are to happen at the end of the 1,000 years and perhaps the veil covering many eyes will drop away. Let's have a look at the bigger picture – what is revealed in the Book of Revelation about the dead and the living --

(Rev 20:5) But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

My comment: The rest of the dead? In the first resurrection at the return of our Lord and Savior YaHshua, there is a resurrection back to life but into a new Spirit Body. You see, the judgment for those in the first resurrection has already happened at the timing of this revelation – for “judgment” begins first with the people of God, the House of God (1 Pt 4:17). When YaHshua returns the House of God, the Church, the real Church of called out ones will be changed and given a new eternal body (1 Jn 3:2).

(Rev 20:10) And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

My Comment: We are using the KJV here and you will notice the word “are” is grayed out and if you look in your own KJV bible you will see this is an added word, a word not found in the originals from which this translation was made. The word “are” suggest the beast and false prophet *are* there being tormented day and night. However, the beast and the false prophet *were* tossed into this lake of fire prepared for Satan and his demons (Mt 25:41), it is they that are to be tormented day and night, and the beast and false prophet *were* of flesh and blood and could not have survived this fire. The translators, had they understood this, would have used the word “*were*” as opposed to “are” but they are blind to this by a pagan bias the Church had already accepted in the lie Satan has been pushing from the beginning, that even the wicked do not really die.

This verse is not about the Beast and the False Prophet, it is about what happens to Satan. Apparently, Satan is held prisoner for a 1,000 years and then is released in a final rebellion, but notice, no mentioning his devil angels. My guess is that they are already in this hell fire, this gehenna fire awaiting their master to join them. This idea of the wicked flesh and blood men and women going to live in a hell fire to be tormented day and night is really the lot of Satan and his angels. Satan has managed to translate his coming judgment to men in a grand deception dating back to the Garden of Eden, “Surely”, he says, “you shall not die.” The lie told by the greatest liar of all time. Make no mistake, at the time of this event, when Satan is finally tossed into this Lake of Fire prepared for him and his angels the Beast and the False prophet will have long burned up and if anything remains it will only be ashes. Maybe this is what Malachi is talking about – Mal 4:3? At any rate, this verse in Revelation is about Satan being tormented

day and night and the mention of the Beast and False Prophet is only to make it clear that it is the very same Hell Fire prepared for him and his angels into which, at the beginning of the return of our Lord the Beast and the False prophet were thrown.

(Rev 20:11) 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.

(Rev 20:12) 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.

My Comment: Remember, we have already been told about a resurrection that happens at the return of YaHshua and this is called the First Resurrection but is only those of the “elect” of God, those who have lived and died for YaHshua, the rest of the dead lived not again until the 1,000 years were finished – Rev 20:5 – remember? This judgment revealed in these verses is happening just before we are introduced to a New Heaven and a New Earth. Notice that the “face of the earth and the heaven” seems to disappear as our God takes His place on the Great White Throne and then all the dead that had ever lived are brought back to life to be judged by how they lived their lives.

(Rev 20:13-15) 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. KJV

My Comment: Again, the false teaching is that the wicked die and go to hell to live a tormented life among demons and devils giving them their just deserts, a fiery place that Satan rules over. This false doctrine is the original lie Satan told and is still telling today and many, if not all, of the professing Christian of today and yesterday still believe this lie. The dead are not living for they have not been judged yet. What? The wicked are then brought up out of hell fire and then tried again only to be thrown back into the place they came from? No, the dead, from the beginning of the world, are not alive in a fiery pit. First we are told the Hell Fire mentioned in the New Covenant is something prepared for Satan and his angels (devils and demons). Once the judgment is finished, at the end of the 1,000 years, those not found worthy of Life Eternal will be thrown into this Lake of Fire, this Hell Fire, not to live on but to die again, this is called the “second death” from which there will be no return. The wicked will cease to exist, but Satan and his angels, it seems, will live on, having been originally created as eternal or immortal beings, it is they that will suffer eternal torment for their actions. Being removed from the rest of creation, the New Heavens and the New Earth, to corrupt it

no more by their evil actions. Mankind was not created immortal but of flesh and will either be changed to immortal by an act of God through YaHshua or will suffer the second death, not the second life, but the second death.

Doctrine of Hell

Okay, we should begin to see why the basic doctrine "Hell" needs to be understood. Getting rid of preconceived notions planted in your mind by the false teachers and the misguided teachers of this world is not easy, but is necessary. A "generation" is being prepared to face up to the Babylonian system of this world, as well as a generation of flesh that will go along with the Babylonian lies and deceptions – called by another name, perhaps, but the same old system now called the Daughter of Babylon.

When the final generation of our Savior's earthly body is stamped (sealed) and ready to stand before the "false Preacher" and the Beast ruler refusing the "Mark", refusing the "false worship" and holding fast to the "testimony of YaHshua", not some "other Gospel", not some other "messiah" they will know the basic doctrines of that "TESTIMONY" and call on no other than YaHshua, having not denied His Name for another (Rev 3:9).

Only through YaHshua will anyone come back to life, their spirit being restored in a new body, a body like that of YaHshua, incorruptible and forever.

(1Co 15:53) For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

(1Jn 3:2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doed not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

Mathew 16:18 "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Again, this English word "hell" is really not understood properly without the true Greek definition. What the Messiah is telling Peter is that the *grave* (hades hell), will not be its end. The church, the very body of the Messiah, the body of true believers of the Christ will come back from the grave to live forever. The individual parts may suffer a physical death and go to the grave but the body of the Christ, the total number, as a "holy city" will be retrieved from this "hades" (hell, grave), its gates shall not prevail against those asleep and waiting YaHshua's return to break them out into eternal life. This is also a guarantee that Satan will not be able to destroy the physical presence of the Church on Earth -- even if it were possible, and it is not, all chosen, all called, all given to the Messiah would still be raised back to life -- that is the promise and the testimony of YaHshua -- His promise to us. This would seem to be the end of it, but it is not, there is another "hell" we need to deal with, and even more.

Hell Number Three (Tartaros)

This "hell" is an "abyss", where rebel angels are held *awaiting* the "day of judgment". It is identified with hades or the earthly grave, so we know this place is not in heaven or some other spiritual realm but in the bowels of the earth, and as we shall see, this is the place the rebel angels are held for the coming judgment.

Strong's #5020, *Tartroo: abyss – the deepest abyss of hades.*

2 Peter 2:4 "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell (tartroo) and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; KJV

2 Peter 2:4 "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment" NIV

Many bible dictionaries don't even bother to mention this "hell", this "tartroo". It is a place of darkness. A place of imprisonment while awaiting the "judgment", it is reckoned as an "abyss" on this earth – perhaps, from a heavenly view, it is the earth itself? We are told that Satan and his angels

are among us, so maybe this "abyss" is the earth itself (Rev 12: 9). What is going to happen when the "judgment" is finished? Looking at what Revelation 20 has to tell us once again --

Rev 20:14-15 "And death and hell (hades - the grave) were cast into the Lake of Fire (Gehenna). This is the second death. And if anyone was not found having been written in the Book of Life, he was cast into the Lake of Fire (Gehenna)." MKJV

You will notice that the "grave" (Hades - hell) are cast into the "Lake of Fire", a "gehenna fire" that puts an end to things. You see this other "hell" or "tartroo" is tied to "grave" or "hades" a dirt hole in the ground, but this "tartroo" hell is much deeper, beyond a simple grave, it is called an "abyss". This earth may be the equivalent of the devils grave, trapped here on this dirt ball in the abyss of heaven. Some speculation, of course, but this would explain the meaning of death and the grave being eventually thrown in to the Hell Fire prepared for Satan and His angels, meaning they are not there – they are not in this "gehenna" hell fire yet, it has not yet been prepared but we read that they are being held in the *abyss, or tartroo*. You have heard that old expression, "Hell on earth", well, maybe that is not so far off the truth.

(Rev 12:12) Therefore rejoice, you heavens, and you that live in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time.

From Revelation chapter 20, we read that death is consumed and the grave is consumed, those things threatening our promise of eternity, thrown into this "gehenna", this Lake of fire prepared for Satan and his angels. This "gehenna" is to be the end, never to be again, just as those not found in the "Book of Life" -- burned up, gone -- this is *Gehenna Hell*. This final destruction of evil follows on the heels of the Great White Throne judgment and it is during this time of judgment that names are removed from the Book of life. You want your name to stay in this book and not to be "blotted", "erased" or "removed" from this book (Revelation 3:5). The

angels Peter mentions (2Pt 2:4) are living in a certain kind of hell, in gloomy dungeons of the abyss – tartaro hell.

Summation – Three Hells:

Hell #1 - Gehenna - G1067 -- An all-consuming fire. Things "perish" that are thrown into it -- total destruction. (other spelling: *geenna*). This is where "death and the grave" will be cast and come to an end.

Hell #2 - Hades - G086 -- The grave, the same as mentioned in the Old Testament H7485 -Sheol -- grave, or pit. (other spelling: *hadou*). This hades or sheol is a place all flesh share in, the grave – our Lord YaHshua was in this "hades" for three days and three nights.

Hell #3 - Tartaros - G5020 -- From the Complete Word Study Dictionary: "The subterranean abyss of Greek mythology where demigods were punished." Also, "These angels are being held in the netherworld dungeon until the day of final judgment." (other spellings: *tartaro, tartaroso*) (*angels as "demigods"*)

Tartaros, is mentioned only once and it is a deliberate choice of a word by Peter. He confirms the existence of a Greek myth concerning a prison where rebel beings are held. This reference in no way mentions or is associated with flesh and blood men, as Peter uses this term, it is a place for the angels that sinned, angels setting themselves up as little "demigods", along with Satan, in their attempts to be gods themselves and replace their Creator. Make no mistake, Peter is plain on this point he is speaking of "angels", spirit beings, not men and not fleshly men seeking to be gods. It is a dungeon this *abyss* where the rebel spirits are held. As speculated before, it is very possible this "abyss", from a heavenly point of view, may well be the earth itself. Reading Revelation 12 we see that Satan drew away a third of the angels of heaven and they are cast down to earth, and then soon after Satan and his angels fight to get back into heaven and it is then we read that Satan himself is then cast down to earth, this prison of demons, angels gone bad. Here they await the "gehenna" fire that is to be prepared for

them and eventually all wicked and evil. The idea that this is to be a dwelling place for the wick to live is a doctrine of devils and demons perpetrating Satan's original lie to mankind, "Surely you shall not die".

Why is this Important?

The Christian Doctrine of "HELL" into which evil men are tossed is a threat mechanism. This type of doctrine is based on fear and the Christian Church has used this place, this prison of evil spirits (angels) to scare people into obedience -- obedience to themselves and their authority, the authority of the "clergy". Even when the religious leaders of the day knew better they continued to threaten the followers with an eternity of torture in "hell fire" for not obeying their commands. The pagan doctrines of devils and demons fit into these scare tactics and the gentile populations were already familiar with the Greek and Roman concepts of spirits ruling over men in death. Basically the teachers of Christianity adopted many pagan concepts, renaming and finding associations within Scripture to support their pagan teachings. It was much easier to make a convert with doctrines already familiar to those you want to convert to your authority.

Many in the Christian Churches still cling to this false doctrine of fear -- the threat of *living forever* in a fiery hell, tormented day and night. It is still used by many as a fear tactic to frighten people into submission. A great number of people have been born into the Christian faith, that is to say they are recognized as Christians because their parents were and these merely follow along accepting as fact many false and pagan doctrines without question, having been taught for so long by those they trust to tell them the truth.

It is a hard thing to think our parents and our ministers have been lying to us but they have. Perhaps not knowingly but by following customs and traditions handed down the Word of God gets lost. For your own personal salvation you need to know the Word and what it really says and protect yourself from such misguided teachings.

But how can anyone do this, what about the millions that lived without a bible to study? This is something we should not stress over. Anyone called to the Messiah in the past would have seen the error of pagan worship and not pray to statues for any reason giving to glory of God to an object. A person called to the Christ would have seen, eventually, the doctrines of captivity and found true freedom in YaHshua. In the final analysis it will be God our Father in Heaven that will, along with YaHshua, know the heart of every person and make the righteous decision for each and every individual. But, for now, we in this generation do have the tools we do have the research capabilities as never before and this leave nearly every called believer without excuse – blind no more.

(Rom 10:4) For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Rom 4:9-10 also)

This being true then why so and have so many thrown aside the Law that was given, delivered, to Moses only to take on new laws and rules and traditions proposed by the ministers (so called) of Christianity? Christians professing belief then chain themselves in bondage to others, other than the Christ and begin to follow the traditions of men.

(Php 2:12-13) Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure

There is a healthy fear and respect we need to have but not the kind of “fear” taught by men. We are to “work out our own salvation”, this is our individual responsibility and cannot be passed off to someone else. We cannot go our Savior and complain that this or that teacher misled us. Or, to haphazardly leave our Eternal fate in the hands of others. If we can see this then it is He that works in us for His own purpose, but we must be willing to follow Him and His Son not men. Sometimes this can mean and has meant for those before us, a lonely life in the world of religion. What do you suppose it means to “come out of her”, out of Babylon? What, you

think that is just some place in Iraq? It is from Babylon the world has received their religion and religions. Even Christianity has been infiltrated by the Daughter of Babylon and follows the teachings of religious Babylon, only the names have been changed to accommodate whatever religion you profess. Nearly all of the Babylonian religions are religions of fear, fear of spirit beings, other than the Creator Himself.

A Christian Doctrine of Fear

Our Heavenly Father is not a God of fear but of Love. In the pure Love of our Father and His Son, our Savior, YaHshua, there is no fear -- certainly respect but not fear, as the world counts fear -- we need not fear death. Satan would like nothing better than to have you quaking in your shoes, afraid of your own shadow constantly anxious about which side of "hell" you stand on. The irony of this in today's world, however, is many have become tired of this constant threat of Hell Fire and some have abandoned the faith of their parents because of this. So, Satan, being the crafty being that he is, has developed another road to travel. This time a new promise is preached, a new kind of salvation – salvation from pain or suffering. This, too, is a new kind of "fear" doctrine, but much more pleasing to hear – yes, you can escape the coming *times of trouble*.

We see this same kind of fear used by the "Escape" preachers in teaching the "Imminent" return doctrine known to many as the Rapture. Preachers of this false doctrine have bragged about how many people this doctrine has saved "fearing" that the Lord may come at any moment. It is a fear base doctrine to get you to accept the authority of those having taking power as leaders in the Christian religion. Along with this fear that our Savior can come at any moment is the comforting thought that when He does He is going to secretly whisk us away to Heaven to safely sit out the coming Tribulation period. They are even making movies about this false promise of escape. But in true love, His Love, we can see much further down the road, that narrow road that leads to the true and permanent Life Eternal, not some pie in the sky promise but the true vision of the love of our God

and the final answer to all of the lies and the evil that seems to surround us.

1 John 4:18 "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear has torment. He that fear is not made perfect in love." KJV

That is a good verse to end with. A lot more could be said on this subject of hell, but then I would be doing all the work. It is your responsibility to study, to find approval with our Father in Heaven . Every time you sit at your study area and read and examine His words He is with you. Pray for wisdom and for understanding -- He wants you to have both, just ask.

I hope you have been able to see the difference between a healthy fear for our God and Father in Heaven and the fear of pain or of men?

Just when I thought this was finished a challenge came in concerning the parable about Lazarus and the rich man. A tale that seems to support the pagan idea of hell -- the place where the wicked are tormented day and night. As we have already seen, there is a place such as this but for the wicked spirits not for mankind. Still, the story of Lazarus and the rich man seem to contradict this. So, we have an update to this article as we deal with this parable.

Lazarus and the Rich Man (update)

Some have wondered about the story of Lazarus and the Rich man (Luke 16:20) as this tale seems to suggest a Heavenly place and a fiery hell where the wicked are living in torment, such as the Rich Man. This parable does say just that. In the previous study, however, we have seen how this is not the case, so what is the answer to this parable, or is there one, or is our Messiah contradicting Himself?

First it is a story, a tale for the purpose of making a point, an *allegory*, and a teaching method not unlike what is still used today. All of the parables told by YaHshua were understood to be stories (parables revealing "hidden"

things Mat 13:34-36) for the purpose of education, not doctrine -- the education of His disciples. So, if our Lord meant this parable to mean something it was not to establish a new doctrine but as a lesson to those who may have such a teaching in their own culture. For example, a teacher wants to relate a lesson to a group of people that believe a certain thing, so you use what they have already accepted as true and turn it around on them for a lesson they had not seen, or ignored. This may have been the case here. Certain of the Jews and others had varying doctrinal teachings when it comes to what happens to the dead. By using their own false teaching He presented to them something they had been doing. As wealthy people of faith they had been ignoring those in need, those right at their own door steps. By turning their teaching around on them He made the point without argument.

This is more than a story or parable about the fiery torment of the wicked, if we are to take it as the true words of our Savior. This is a revelation that there is no return, one in hell always in hell – not resurrection, only hot torment. If you do not accept the Son of God you are destined to go to this place of fire and never return or ever get another chance. First, the warning of caring for those less fortunate than yourself and if you don't then off to Hell to live in torment the rest of your life – rest of your life? Wait a minute, in this parable it is a dead guy talking to another dead guy – where is the reality here? It is really an allegory with a lesson, not a so much a parable and certainly not a doctrine, as some have tried to make it. It is a story and has a lesson but has not real scriptural support in fact – that is why I say it is an allegory, things that are not true, or real, are used to make a point.

We need to understand the context of this allegorical story -- He, YaHshua, was speaking to the general public, whom the Pharisees look down their noses at. The Pharisees are listening in. We read in Luke 15:1 the Pharisees were grumbling and ridiculing this teacher as this Rabbi, YaHshua, was capturing the intense attention of those considered sinners by the Pharisees. We read in verse three YaHshua begins to tell a parable story

aimed at these professed leaders of the people and in this case the story is true and relatable, having to do with sheep and shepherds, something people could relate to.

YaHshua continues with more stories told for the purpose of teaching higher moral principles, principles the religious leaders of that day were loath to acknowledge, for themselves, then we come to Luke 16:14 and again the Pharisees began "sneering at YaHshua" and this is when YaHshua addressed them straight out concerning how they justify themselves but God the Father knows their true hearts. Then YaHshua goes on with things concerning the Law and about *divorce* and *adultery*. Then, as if an afterthought, YaHshua delivers the *parable (allegory)* about Lazarus and the Rich man – one in hell fire and the other in the bosom of Abraham, or Heaven.

Let's have a look at this lesson as a doctrine forgetting for the moment what the lesson is being taught. First, as a doctrine: Lazarus is seen to be in the bosom of Abraham and the Rich Man is in hell fire. The word for "hell", in this case, is "hades" (Hell #2), which is to say, "the grave" and not the hot place of "gehenna" hell, or hell fire. The Rich man, however, seems to be in a fiery place, while Lazarus is in the comfort of Abraham's bosom, which is strange in itself – if we are to accept this lesson as fact. If YaHshua meant this to be a real place He would have used "Hell #1, *Gehenna, or Hell Fire*, but no, the "hell" used here is for the grave, not some hot fiery place the Rich man is describing. Using this story as a doctrine, or support for a doctrine is a real problem, as the word used for this "hell" is clearly not the "hell" the Rich man is seemingly describing. Another problem, Lazarus is not said to be in Heaven at all, as the Christians teach, but is in the bosom of Abraham. This can be confusing then as we try to figure out where the bosom of Abraham is and if we turn to Scripture we find nothing about the "bosom of Abraham" on earth or in Heaven. If we decide it must be Abraham in Heaven then where are the Christians? It would seem, at this point, we have only evidence for Jews and Israelites being in Heaven – Moses, Abraham, maybe a couple of others but no mention or visions of

any Gentiles in Heaven. From this, as a doctrine, one would have to say this applies to the Israelites -- the poor Israelites -- not the Christians. Still, we are told in Galatians 3:29 that if we belong to the Messiah we are counted among the seed of Abraham. So, where is Abraham, some say heaven but it does not say this. Let's go a little further and see if we can find where Abraham is.

Please note, the "hell" YaHshua used here is of the *grave* (hades) and not the "fiery hell" (Gehenna). In this tale, however, we see the Rich Man already in this "fiery hell", but wait, in Luke 16:22-23 we see the beggar dies and is taken by angels into the "bosom" of Abraham and then the Rich Man dies and is buried and from the grave (hades) we see the Rich Man crying out. We have already seen where the "fiery hell" is and it is not until later this Hell Fire is to be prepared for Satan and his angels. Satan is not ruling over a fiery hell in the depths of the earth, but this parable (?) seems to say there is a lower region of fire and torment not unlike what some of the Greek, Canaanite, and Babylonian myths suggest. This makes this supposed Parable suspicious in origin. All kinds of red flags on this one.

I am of the opinion, like I mentioned before, that this tale, unlike the other parables, is being told to the Pharisees using a teaching of their own, or at least, a teaching familiar and popular with the locals. Still, it would seem the Pharisees may have taught this concept of a fiery hell and YaHshua used their own flawed teaching on them as a lesson for all. The last verse in this rebuke of the Pharisees tells it all. Abraham is conversing with the Rich Man (the beggar is mute) and in the end tells the Rich man it is useless to send a warning of any kind to his family for the simple reason that if they would not listen to Moses and the Prophets (Torah + Scripture) then neither would they believe someone raised from the dead. YaHshua was true in all of this, He rose from the dead, and they, the descendants of the Rich Man believed it not. This is what seem reasonable to me in light of other scripture that contradict this as a teaching to be taken seriously for a Greek style and Jewish concept of the Nether world, or a place of eternal torment. But this story smacks of error and should not be taken as a truth. It is more

like a story told after the fact. YaHshua did die and was raised back to life and contrary to this tale of Hell many of this man's brothers and sisters, other Jews, did believe and were converts to the truth. But in this story we are led to believe this will not be possible. This brings me to question the origin of this story, again.

The story of the Rich Man has some serious flaws and on further investigation we find some Biblical commentators suggest this very same thing; that this is not a true "parable" from YaHshua our Messiah at all. All of the parables were spoken by YaHshua, and later, were explained to His disciples but not in this case (again look at Mat 13:34-36 as an example). Some serious questions are raised about this "parable". For one it falls in a very odd place in the narrative. Our Lord is speaking to everyone gathered around, with the Pharisees grumbling in the background, as we have read, and suddenly YaHshua goes from lessons in Torah, expanding on the spiritual meaning, finishing with the subject of "adultery" and suddenly launches into the story about Lazarus and the Rich man. Biblical linguist skilled in the art of style and being able to identify a writer by the style of writing have questioned this parable as the narrative style seems to change from what is previously written suggesting this is possibly a fraudulent addition. This would not be the first time the well-meaning hands of men have tried to buttress a biased opinion or belief by adding to the word. Mark 16:9-20 is a perfect example, this section of Mark has been recognized by nearly all Biblical scholars as a later addition from around 1100 AD. So, do we have the same thing here? This story about Lazarus and the Rich man really does teach a moral lesson and does seem to support the Christian view of Heaven and Hell. But, as we have seen, this is not really what the rest of the New Covenant writers support.

Something else to think about, if we are to accept this as a legitimate "parable" from our Lord and Savior, YaHshua, and not something added by some copyist at a later date, then we must consider how this story ends - with a warning concerning obedience to the Law of Moses - the Old Covenant. Most Christian organizations teach a freedom from the Law,

but in this “parable” it is those who will not listen to the LAW that are in danger of going where this Rich man is, in a very hot place.

(Luke 16:30-31) *And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"*

If we are to believe these are the true words of YaHshua then we have the proverbial, “catch 22”, or the “damned if you do and damned if you don’t” scenario. If Christians say this is a true teaching about the existence of a fiery hell where the dead wick go to live, then they should start teaching the Law of Moses and get busy restoring the Old Covenant – something the Christian churches with any power have tried to do away with for centuries. You cannot have both. This parable is either all right or all wrong.

If we understand the tale as a teaching doctrine from our Lord then it has to apply to a future date, not yet seeing its fulfillment for another 2000 years, or more, by the mere fact that the “fiery hell” of scripture is not until the Beast and False Prophet as Revelation reveals the timing of it, this Hell Fire, being “prepared” (Mat 25:41; Rev 20:10). Please be aware, the book of Revelation is handed down from our Heavenly Father to YaHshua and then to the Apostle John (Rev 1:1) and by this alone the authority for the truth of this Book is handed down from Father to Son to servant. The Hell Fire, the “gehenna” is to be prepared at the return of YaHshua.

(Mat 8:11) And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

The verse above is in a future tense, obviously, and if this is so it would stand against the idea of Lazarus being with Abraham in heaven at the time of the parable teaching. Also, if this is to be taken as a literal description by YaHshua, then we would have to say that Lazarus is literally within Abraham's chest (bosom), but in the above verse there is no mention of Lazarus. Where is this Kingdom of Heaven? It is on the earth,

clearly, and when is this Kingdom to come? At the return of our Savior, YaHshua, and this is why we pray, "Our Father in Heaven, holy is your Name. We pray your Kingdom Come your will be done on Earth...." Remember the Lord's prayer?

(Mar 12:26) And as touching the dead, that they rise: have you not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spoke to him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

(Mat 22:31-32) But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

What are these verses telling us? The resurrection of the dead includes Abraham and this is where the poor Lazarus (if a real person) will be and that still is in the future. The "doctrine of the resurrection", a doctrine our savior taught, and His Apostles taught, should put the "parable" of Lazarus in the right light, as a "parable", a fictitious story or allegorical story. The resurrection of the *dead* is not a resurrection of the *living*, those dead people living beneath the earth looking up into heaven as is described in this tale of Lazarus and the Rich man. Nor are those in Heaven looking down on those being tormented in a fiery hell. For one thing, our Savior tells us no one can go Heaven unless they are from Heaven in the first place, and He makes it plain that that is where He is from, not you or me.

(John 3:13) And no man has ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

(Luke 13:28) There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. (Clearly this is still future)

In John 8:52-58 you will read of a confrontation Yahshua had with the Pharisees and how Abraham and the Prophets are all dead -- no mention, or correction from our Savior. Not one word about their "fathers" being

alive in Heaven. The idea they are dead and in the grave is assumed and not challenged.

(Act 2:29) Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.

(Act 2:34) For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he says himself, The LORD (YHWH) said to my Lord, Sit you on my right hand,

(Act 13:36) For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

Again this is a teaching concerning the resurrection and it is made plain David is dead and buried awaiting the resurrection. Some have tried to make something out of the remarks concerning the saints being "asleep" and if "asleep" not dead. From our view in the physical world, as physical beings, we die and those in the grave are dead, but, in the eyes of YaHshua there are those whom He loves, that belong to Him and from His view they are sleeping, awaiting His return to raise them from the bed of death. Just as we see the wording concerning David, a man much loved by YHWH, but reading the full context we see the truth -- David's body did not just "sleep" but "*saw corruption*". The metaphor of being asleep, when referring to a servant, or saint of the Living God, is reminding us of a condition that is only temporary, not unlike when we go to bed and sleep only to wake up the next morning. David did not go to Heaven but some teach that they, that when they die they will go to heaven, even if YaHshua says they won't.

What are we to assume, then, that the poor beggar, Lazarus, went to heaven and David, much loved of God, and from whom the seed of Righteousness would come (Roman 1:3) did not? From this we can assume Abraham too is in the grave and the "parable" is just that, a parable, a lesson story, not a fact to be taken literally.

The Other Lazarus

In John 11:43, another Lazarus, a friend of YaHshua, had died and was in a grave (a tomb). After three days YaHshua went and had the stone covering removed and called for Lazarus to come out, and he did. Notice, YaHshua did not call to Lazarus to come out of Heaven nor out of a nether world beneath His feet but it is into the crypt He called to Lazarus, "*Come out*". This took place *before* YaHshua's confrontation with the Pharisees about the Laws, Moses and the Prophets, which strangely ends with the story about Lazarus and the rich man. I am thinking the use of the name Lazarus, in this story, was on purpose. When the religious authorities of that day heard what had happened concerning the real Lazarus they could not take it anymore and from then on tried to figure a way to kill YaHshua -- John 11:53 -- it seems the raising of Lazarus from the dead was the last straw.

The Promise Not yet Received

(Heb 11:39-40) And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Reading all of Hebrew 11 you will see *those "having obtained a good report through faith"* includes all the "faithful" seen to be in the Kingdom of God -- Abraham is there in this group but is not there yet, not before the Followers of YaHshua -- our perfection as well as theirs is still future. Only those made perfect will be allowed into the Kingdom. This would mean the story of Lazarus and the rich man is just that, a story, a tale to illustrate a point.

Again, if the story of Lazarus and the Rich Man is to be taken literally as a teaching of Heaven and Hell, as the pagans view it, then we must see the bosom of Abraham, where the angels took the beggar, as being very close to Heaven, separated by a "gulf". The Rich Man sees the poor Lazarus, and attempts to strike up a conversation, requesting Lazarus be sent to his family, to warn them. This would seem to indicate Lazarus, in the bosom of Abraham, is on earth, not in Heaven -- being on the side of the gulf where

the Rich Man's house and family are, after all, the Rich man is requesting Lazarus be sent to his brothers, right? The only objection to this, however, is that they, his five brothers, would not listen even if someone were raised from the dead -- remember the actions of the religious leaders of the day when YaHshua's friend was raised from the dead? With this line of thought, the location of the bosom of Abraham would be somewhere on Earth, wouldn't it?

Also, one final (?) thought about this teaching of a Heaven and Hell doctrine so very similar to that of pagan Rome and Greece, so similar, too, to the Babylonian religions concepts of the dead –

Abraham is having a conversation with the RM and if this is supposed to be the actual Abraham, alive, he must have a very large bosom to be collecting all of the beggars. Also, as a tale of Heaven and Hell and as a doctrine of the Church this would mean, literally, that all the rich are going to a fiery hell while the beggars and the homeless are going to heaven -- look at Luke 16:25, it seems to say -- the rich go to Hell, but the beggars go to Heaven, doesn't it? We could take this even further and say that all on this Earth that have suffered will go to heaven and all that have had a good life will go to hell. However, in the New Covenant records we see some very prominent people having accepted the one that rose from the dead, our Savior, YaHshua, as the Son of God and being devout followers. Remember one example, Joseph of Arimathea, a rich merchant who went to beg for the body of the Messiah and then taking his body to the "rich mans" tomb to be buried (Mk 15:43)? Again, the truth throws a heavy shadow over the validity of the Lazarus and the Rich man story.

I am torn between two opinions, the one that this is a bogus addition to the writings of Luke and the other that this was a teaching of the Pharisees that YaHshua turned around on them -- that's my opinion, until some further light can be thrown on this. One thing is sure, the teaching of the pagan "heaven hell" doctrine is at odds with the rest of scripture, and like pagan doctrines teaching *the original lie* that no matter what we are – wicked or saint, we are all immortal, be it in heaven or in hell.

Remember, the New Testament gospels records how YaHshua kept putting the Pharisees and their false ideas on display revealing them for what they had become, He constantly quoted what they taught and thought and turned it on them, and, as I have said before, I think that is what is going on here. There is also some questions concerning the origin of this "parable"? It seems it is not like any of the other parable teaching of YaHshua in style or form. This has led some to doubt this was ever a teaching of YaHshua at all, that it is most likely a later addition by some well-meaning scribe. This would not be the first time this has happened as we can testify to concerning the Gospel of Mark, chapter 16, and verses 9 through 20, obviously added to the text at a much later date.

When in Doubt

I do not pretend to have all of the answers and will not pretend to completely understand the tale in the form of a "dourine" but I think I do understand the message, the teaching. Ignore the Heaven and Hell for a moment and read it for the message. It is a message for all of us, not just the rich. I still like the idea of this tale from YaHshua, addressed specifically toward the Pharisees as an opportunity he may have taken to turn their own tale or threat of bad conduct back on them. The Pharisees and Sadducees, mystics dabbling in oral traditions contradicting the truth with fables made up, were not afraid to engage in fiction, or to even take from ancient secret knowledge (so called) found in traditions and customs of their fathers and from pagan idol worshipers from the past. This is what Yahshua meant when He accused them of following the traditions of men rather than of the Living God. Even today the Jewish Cabbalist, or mystics, dabble in this kind of "secret knowledge", knowledge that is beyond Scripture itself. This, of course, opens up all sorts of imaginations and the possibility for many falsehoods to be accepted as truths.

And this is the kind of tale that would be told by religious leaders to encourage the rich to give to the poor, and in Jerusalem, during that time, the way you did that was to drop money into the Temple coffers – yes, give to the church and we will take care of the poor – some do, some don't. I am

speculating, of course, but it does explain the seemingly contradictory view of Heaven and Hell, and when you have our Savior telling us --

John 3:13 -No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man. NIV

Not even David -- Acts 2:34-36

John 6:38 -For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.

Only YaHshua, among men, has come from Heaven and returned -- John 16:28

The Final, Final Word

(Rev 20:1-3) Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. (Note: "Pit", same as "abyss" but not the same word used for "abyss" by Peter, tartaros – this appears to be a different place)

(Rev 20:4) Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of YaHshua and for the word of God (The Holy Bible), and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. (Note: They came to life, meaning they were dead and not already alive somewhere else – the word is true – HalleluYaH)

Would anyone seriously argue that all of this is taking place in the Heaven of Heavens? What about after the 1,000 years? Satan is released and all the rebellious of nations follow him, Satan, into the final destruction by fire from Heaven – please take the time to read all of Revelation 20.

Where are we that are left, after Satan is released and then all who rebel are destroyed by this fire from Heaven – where are the survivors all heading? Look at the answer in the last Chapter of the Revelation --

(Rev 22:1) Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

(Rev 22:3) No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God (the Father) and of the Lamb will be in it, and His servants will worship Him. They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

When we read from Revelation 20 through 22 we see the central theme is things having to do with “nations”, “people”, “death” and “life”, “eternity”, God the Father’s throne as well as the Son’s being among men. We read of a New Heaven and a New Earth. What? A NEW EARTH.

If we all are to go to Heaven, then why a New Earth? The context, the focal point is Earth and what is going to happen here in a New Creation. God the Father is coming here where the Lamb is and the people of the Lamb, the saints as resurrected beings with new immortal bodies, like YaHshua, He being the first of many.

(1Jn 3:2) Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. ESV (Note: We are going to be like HIM!)

(1Co 15:20) But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ESV

(1Co 15:23) But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at His coming those who belong to Christ. ESV

Those who belong to the Christ, YaHshua, alive and asleep in death, we are waiting on Him to return –

(John 5:21) For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He will. (Note: No mention of anyone from earth living in Heaven save our Savior, YaHshua)

(Rom 8:11) If the Spirit of Him who raised YaHshua from the dead lives in you, He who raised Christ YaHshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Does any of this sound like things happening in the Heaven of Heavens? He is coming as the “Firstfruit” to raise to life those that belong to Him by the power and authority of the Heavenly Father – this will be the resurrection of those at His return, of those who have the spirit of the Father – *“If the Spirit of Him who raised YaHshua from the dead lives in you...”*.

This message is to the living not the dead. Remember, He is a God of the living, not the dead. Understanding this we should then be able to understand this instruction from His Spirit living in us. It is not *living* in us when we are dead, but in us while we are alive. This is a mark, a seal that we are not forgotten. The wicked do not have His Spirit living in them and when they are raised for the judgment this will be all too apparent. Some will go on into life, some to eternal death, from which there is not return. Hell fire is eternal death, not just another form of “life”.

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