

Hell in the Bible By Rodney Bowen

We all know that the church idea of hell and eternal torment are not consistent with true Bible teaching. The word hell does occur in the Bible, but if we look at the verses it is found in, and the meaning of the Hebrew or Greek words translated hell, we will see that it is something completely different to what contemporary 'christian' theology teaches.

There are four words translated as hell:

Sheol [/av]: A Hebrew word used in the Old Testament meaning, a hollow and subterranean place (Gesenius) The Grave

Translated as grave: Genesis 37:35; Genesis 42:38; Genesis 44:29, 31; 1st Samuel 2:6; 1st Kings 2:6, 9; Job 7:9; Job 14:13; Job 17:13; Job 21:13; Job 24:19; Psalms 6:5; Psalms 30:3; Psalms 31:17; Psalms 49:14, 15; Psalms 88:3; Psalms 89:48; Psalms 141:7; Proverbs 1:12; Proverbs 3:16; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Song of Solomon 8:6; Isaiah 14:9, 11; Isaiah 38:10, 18; Ezekiel 31:15 - 17; Hosea 13:14;

Translated as hell/pit: Numbers 16:30, 33; Deuteronomy 32:22; 2nd Samuel 22:6; Job 11:18; Job 17:16; Job 26:6; Psalms 9:17; Psalms 16:10; Psalms 18:5; Psalms 55:15; Psalms 86:13; Psalms 116:3; Psalms 139:8; Proverbs 5:5; Proverbs 7:27; Proverbs 9:18; Proverbs 15:11; Proverbs 23:14; Proverbs 27:20; Isaiah 5:14; Isaiah 14:9, 11, 15; Isaiah 28:15, 18; Isaiah 57:9; Ezekiel 31:15 - 17; Ezekiel 32: 21, 27; Amos 9:2; Jonah 2:2; Habakkuk 2:5;

Hades: A Greek word used in the New Testament in the same way as Sheol (O.T.), meaning, unseen/not to be seen (Thayers), i.e. the realm of the dead the grave. From alpha as a neg. particle and eido to see.

Translated as grave: 1st Corinthians 15:55;

Translated as hell/pit: Matthew 11:23; Matthew 16:18; Luke 10:15; Luke 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; Revelation 1:18; Revelation 6:8; Revelation 20:13, 14;

Gehenna: A Greek word used in the New Testament meaning, valley of (the sons of) Hinnom. (Comes from the Hebrew Gai valley and Hinnom a man who once possessed the valley; his name means wailing/ lamentation (cp. Joshua 15:8; Joshua 18:16; 2nd Kings 23:10; Isaiah 30:33; Jeremiah 7:30-33; Jeremiah 19:5-7; Joel 3:3, 12; It is also interesting to look at the meaning of Tophet). Note: The valley of Hinnom ran down the west of Jerusalem. It was the rubbish tip where the refuse of the city was burned. In early times it was the site of child sacrifice in which the idolatrous Jews burned their children to the god Moloch. Latter criminals bodies were thrown onto the fires to burn. For the Jew, Gehenna would have conjured up ideas of rejection, destruction of the body, and eternal death as the punishment from God for sin.

Translated as hell: Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; Matthew 10:28; Matthew 18:9; Matthew 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43; Mark 45:47; Luke 12:5; Joshua 3:6;

Tartaroo: A Greek word used only once in the New Testament. In popular Greek mythology tartarus meant lower than hell (hades) Corresponding to the Jewish Gehenna (Thayers).

Used: 2nd Peter 2:4; Some believe that Peter is here referring to hell as the place Korah, Dathan, and Abiram went when swallowed up by the earth awaiting judgement (cp. Numbers 16;).