



50 Questions About Hell



Mainstream Christianity traditionally teaches that unsaved individuals are punished for eternity in Hell, with allegorical passages such as Isaiah 14:9-11 and Luke 16:19-31 taken literally. Many believe that Hell is an underground realm, ruled by Satan, where the unsaved are tortured by fire that burns them painfully, yet without causing them to pass out or die. However, some denominations teach that Hell is simply an emotionally tormenting eternal separation from God. The Roman Catholic Church teaches an intermediate state of Purgatory, from which one might attain to either Heaven or Hell.

*In the year 1321, shortly before he died, Dante Alighieri completed his highly influential epic poem *Divina Commedia* (Divine Comedy), consisting of three parts: *Inferno* (Hell), *Purgatorio* (Purgatory), and *Paradiso* (Paradise or Heaven). Some consider his writings as accurate regarding the various states of the afterlife. His writings have been illustrated in captivating sketches and paintings by various artists, and these images have been used as tools to encourage conversion.*



When considering either mainstream teachings or Dante Alighieri's writings, the following questions arise when comparing them to Biblical texts, and reflecting on the will and nature of God. The reader is challenged to consider these questions, and seek the Biblical truth about the disposition of the unsaved.

- 1) If the unsaved are already in Hell, and especially if it is burning, exactly where is it located, and could we drill a hole to it?
- 2) When men drill wells and extract oil and natural gas from the ground, are they removing some of the fuel used to keep the fires of Hell burning, or is Hell still deeper in the hot core of the Earth?
- 3) How hot would the fire of Hell feel to someone in it, if it didn't actually burn them up or cause them to pass out?
- 4) Is there any way to be sure that those being tormented in Hell will not eventually acclimatize to the pain, possibly develop a taste for it, or perhaps become desensitized emotional zombies?
- 5) If immortality means being changed into the form of a spirit being, how could something physical like fire even cause any pain to such a being? (John 3:6-8)
- 6) If the words translated hell in the Bible (Hebrew word sheol, and Greek word hades) actually mean 'the grave' or 'the pit' in those languages, why is hell made out to be a hot place of torture instead of a place of burial after death? (Acts 2:25-27, Eccl 9:10)
- 7) Would Hell be a more tolerable place for those consigned to it if Satan shirked his duties in running it properly?
- 8) What if Satan again rebelled against God, refused to run Hell, and let everyone loose from it?

- 9) Do those sent to Hell because they hated God, also learn to hate Satan for running the place?
- 10) Could God trust his enemy Satan to run Hell correctly? (John 8:44)
- 11) Why would Satan want to torture those that hate God as he does, especially since Satan worked so hard to get them to develop the same sinful, rebellious attitude as himself? (Rev 12:9)
- 12) Wouldn't Satan rather punish those that love God than those that hate God?
- 13) Wouldn't Satan rather devote all his extra time to another attempt to take over the throne of God and be in charge of the Universe, instead of running Hell for God?
(Isa 14:12-20, Ezek 28:14-19, Luke 10:18, Rev 12:17)
- 14) If Hell is only an eternity separated from God, isn't that exactly what those that reject God would want, and wouldn't they therefore be pleased, suffering no torment whatsoever from the separation?
- 15) If someone that had been in Hell a long time was offered a chance to leave it, would they leave only to selfishly escape the pain, or to genuinely serve the God that had put them there? (John 4:24)
- 16) Do the unsaved suffering in Hell envy the saved, talking with one another about what they are missing, and/or do they wish their saved family members were with them in Hell?
- 17) Is being burnt by fire the only punishment in Hell, or are there a variety of punishments as described by Dante Alighieri, which might make one's eternal stay there a wee bit more interesting?
- 18) Will Dante Alighieri be punished for his writings, or can he claim it was a work of fiction for entertainment purposes only, and petition for a better afterlife? (Matt 12:36-37, Matt 10:26)
- 19) If most people alive on the Earth are destined for Hell, why doesn't God just kill them all now and send them there, thereby making this present world a better place?
- 20) Why doesn't God just force everyone to say the words "I accept Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior" (if that is all one must do to be saved) just before they die so that He doesn't have to send them to Hell?
- 21) What would endless torment of the unsaved accomplish - would this cause them to repent of their sins, and if they did, wouldn't it be too late?
- 22) Is God more cruel than Saddam Hussein who variously beat, mutilated, gassed, or stuffed Iraqi citizens in wood shredders since, after all, those folks suffered only a very short while in comparison to the never ending eons of all eternity?
- 23) Could it be that God will send unsaved non-Christian individuals, tortured and killed by Saddam Hussein, to Hell despite the horror they experienced prior to their physical death?
- 24) Since you didn't choose to be born into this world, wouldn't it be unfair if God did not give you the choice to leave it permanently, as opposed to having to live forever in Purgatory and/or Heaven and/or Hell?

- 25) Have souls been lost to Hell every time a missionary has had a flat tire or been delayed in some other way, and was not able to reach a person in time to convert them before they died?
- 26) Is God glad that Satan rebelled, so that the running of Hell could be delegated to Satan?
- 27) Shouldn't God be running Hell to make sure that the torment is being done correctly and continually?
- 28) For the saved, wouldn't just knowing that lost loved ones are being continually tortured dampen their spirits all during their eternal saved lives, perhaps even create a mental Hell for them?
- 29) If God supports eternal torment or torture (as opposed to a quick and merciful death in a Lake of Fire) for those that refuse His teachings, does that not make God the ultimate cruel religious radical?
- 30) If God is more loving than you are, and if you would maybe punish but never torture your own wayward children, can you conceive of God torturing His children? (Prov 13:24, Heb 12:5-7)
- 31) If God really would condemn unrepentant sinners to everlasting torture, then would it be better to serve such a cruel God, or be tortured by that God?
- 32) For what will those consigned to Hell that never learned about Christianity think they are being punished, or will they be informed at the last moment that it is because they had never heard about or accepted someone named Jesus Christ? (Isa 11:9)
- 33) Will wayward and violent individuals, improperly brought up by their parents to be cynical, cold-hearted, and mean, have to suffer forever in Hell because their parents didn't do a good job of raising them? (Deut 11:18-21)
- 34) Given that Jesus' one-day ordeal of mocking, scourging, and crucifixion was sufficient punishment for all the sins of mankind, why would God punish unrepentant sinners with an infinitely greater punishment - eternal torture in Hell for countless billions of years? (1 Pet 3:18, Heb 10:10)
- 35) Will God hurt forever, feeling compassion for the suffering He was forced to inflict on the unsaved because He is compelled to be a just God, or will He relish seeing them suffer endlessly?
- 36) After several million years have passed, is it possible that now and then it might not cross the mind of God, or the minds of those that are saved, that there are folks being racked by pain in Hell?
- 37) Could torture in Hell, or the threat of it in Purgatory, cause some of the unsaved to somehow develop a genuine love for God, for which God would take them out of there?
- 38) If torturing sinners forever is something God doesn't want to do, but must because it is proper justice, will God tell those being punished that it will hurt Him as much as it hurts them?
- 39) Since a truly just God would only punish in proportion to the offense, and a merciful God would pardon every sin repented of, how bad of a thing could one do to deserve torture (or even boredom if there were no torture) for all eternity?

40) Will hundreds of millions of individuals from China, India, and all other places that have never heard the name of Christ, let alone accept Christ, let alone know that there might be eternal torment ahead, be tortured in Hell by the God that created mankind?

41) Patriarchs and prophets with special connections excepted, have all those that lived before Christ been sent to Hell, having never heard the only name by which they may be saved? (Acts 4:10-12)

42) Are individuals consigned to Hell granted immortality or eternal life, or are they already immortal souls and it is just a matter of where they spend it? (1 Cor 15:53-55)

43) If God is a God of love and mercy, loves all His children, and is not willing that any should be lost, how could God do such a thing as inflicting any torture on His own children, let alone forever? (2 Pet 3:9)

44) If folks go right to Heaven or Hell when they die, why did Christ say that the time is coming when all that are in their graves will hear His voice and awake, some to everlasting life and some to judgment (some translations incorrectly read damnation or condemnation). (John 5:28-29)

45) If everyone goes off to existence somewhere else when they die, who are the "the rest of the dead" in Revelation Chapter 20 who don't live again until the 1000 years (of the Millennium) are ended, and how can there be a "second death" unless one is given another physical life? (Rev 20:4-6)

46) Why does the Bible state that the soul that sins will die? (Ezek. 18:4, 20)

47) Why did Jesus say to fear Him who can destroy both body and soul in Gehenna fire? (Matt. 10:28)

48) If the unsaved will be burnt up and be ashes under the feet of the righteous, doesn't that imply they won't be tortured forever in some kind of Hell fire? (Mal 4:1-3)

49) If Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed with eternal fire, and yet they are no longer burning, can one deduct that this simply means the effect of the fire is lasting; or that an unquenchable fire must simply burn itself out; or that everlasting fire is one with everlasting effects? (Jude 1:7, Matt 3:12, Matt 18:8)

50) Does the Bible teach that Satan and his rebellious angels will be punished, and that there is no eternal torture of unsaved men, but rather destruction in a Lake of Fire (likened to the burning Gehenna garbage dump outside Jerusalem where worms attacked what did not burn), and only after first being given full opportunity to learn of God and live accordingly, if need be in a second physical life? (Matt 10:14-15, 10:28, 13:36-43, 25:41, Rev 20:4-6, 20:11-15, 21:1-8, Isa 65:17-20)

Be assured that God is a loving and merciful God that will reach every human being with the truth, either in this age or in a future resurrection to physical life. Only the few that reject God will He mercifully destroy in the Lake of Fire. They will experience weeping and gnashing of teeth (self-pity and self-hate) for knowing that they have only themselves to blame for not accepting the truth presented to them, just prior to being burned to ashes, body and soul. There are only two outcomes for every human being – permanent life or permanent death. God hopes you will choose life.