



## Hell Fire

I am excited to continue teaching the subject of “hell” as used in the Bible. All too often, we tend to alter our perceptions of knowledge based on external influences. This extreme risk often far-removes a well-meaning Christian from an accurate understanding of God’s Word. Let me give you an example. If you see pictures depicting the burning ravages of hellfire, year after year, you will probably tend to believe them and allow them to mold your perception as to hellfire and its related subjects. Now, if you add to that picture, people suffering in those same flames, you might even tend to believe that you could also end up in that dismal state. Well, I hope that you get the idea. Sadly, there are lots of



pictures just like that, and they all give you ample opportunity to form a personally unique perception of hellfire. A primary objective of this, and subsequent teachings on this subject, is to deliver you from any related fears. God is the God of Love, not fear, death and torment. Let’s keep an open mind and work to remove any devilish fears that may be caused by wrong teachings on this delicate subject.

The question arises, “Are those perceptions Biblically based?” Honestly, most people don’t take

the time to research God’s Word to find out.

*(2 Tim 2:15) Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Often, the closest they ever get to “research” is listening to their favorite teacher expound his own perceptions. If you are ever going to stand approved before God, you must learn to rightly divide God’s Word. Then, and only then, will you be able to lay claim to the fact that you have molded your perceptions according to Scripture, and not to man’s opinion.

# Hell Fire

If I could find one single Biblical reference, addressed to Christians, affirming a sure pathway to hell, I would be the first to promote it and provide any and all related scripture. I would teach it constantly, and continue to study it in order to ensure Biblical accuracy. I would submit to the concept of hellfire, and allow the subsequent fear to drive my life to some special form of perfection, if even possible. I would thank God daily for his wonderful gift of burning fires, and fill my mind with excited, yes, aggravated enthusiasm, for the day that, I, too, would finally step into his marvelous creation of heat and flames. I would do everything in my power to bow down to His plan and accept it with my whole being. Wouldn't you?

I am still waiting to find such a teaching purely from Scripture. When I do, I will release a special

edition of Artios, expressly for the purpose of public confession, that I was wrong and God corrected me.

On the other hand, if you teach hellfire to well-meaning students of yours, and your teachings are not based on Scripture addressed specifically to Christians, maybe it is time for you to consider a similar letter?

There are seven books in the Bible specifically addressed to Christians.

Romans

Corinthians (1 and 2)

Galatians

Ephesians

Philippians

Colossians

Thessalonians (1 and 2)

The book of Acts introduces these fantastic Church Epistles, as they are commonly called. The books

following Thessalonians are not considered Church Epistles, but they still are mostly addressed to Christians, with one exception – Revelations. The last book in the Bible is addressed to other groups of people, but not Christians.

A student of Scripture must understand the simple and foundations truth that not all Scripture is addressed to Christians. If you were to open a letter addressed to your friend, without his permission, you would be guilty of breaking the law. In a sense, the same concept applies when reading the Bible. You won't be breaking any law, save laws of research and study, but you will easily risk proper application of Christian-specific doctrine, reproof and correction.

Did you know that the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are not addressed to Christians? That's right. There isn't one verse

# Hell Fire

addressed to Christians in any of those four, marvelous works. Can you learn many things from them? Yes, you can. Do some things taught in those books seem to apply to Christianity? Yes, they do. But are they addressed to Christians? The answer is, No. They are addressed mostly to the Jews. Jesus was a Jew. His disciples were Jews. The people they ministered to and taught were Jews. The time period was considered to be under the Old Testament Law and that Law still applied. The gift of holy spirit had not yet been given. Christianity had not yet commenced during the time when Jesus walked on this earth.

But, sadly, these wonderful Gospel teachings are elevated far above the Church Epistles in most Christian churches today. Does that mean we should respect the Gospels more than the books in the Bible addressed to us? Well,

you make that decision yourself. I have already made mine.

(Rom 15:4) For whatsoever things were written aforetime [before the day of Pentecost] were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

When it comes to teachings on hell and hellfire as presented in the Gospels, these truths must be applied. Jesus had specific reasons for teaching the Jews, not Christians, such teachings. Once you understand “why” Jesus taught what he did, you’ll be able to clearly understand more about proper application of the same. Let’s take Matthew 11:23 as our first example.

Using the phrase “to hell,” I found seven verses, three of which, applied to this study. The first one in the New Testament

was:

And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. (Matthew 11:23)

In this verse, Jesus taught that an entire city would end up in hell. That sounds pretty scary, doesn’t it. You’ve got to ask a question, “how can a city be bound for hell?” Maybe this is where those great artists got some of their inspiration.

Before I say any more about this verse, I need to introduce four special words that are responsible for guiding this, and the rest of the studies on this subject of hell.

# Hell Fire

## These words are:

- Haides – Greek – “place where the dead are buried – gravedom.”
- She’owl – Hebrew – “place where the dead are buried – gravedom or pit.”
- Tartaros – Greek – “a very bad place where evil spirits will eventually end up.”
- Gehenna – Greek – “the local trash dump that forever burns.”

I am shocked that the translators all used one English word “hell” to describe four different source words, none of which mean “hell.” Now, you might think death is a “hellish” thing to have to go through, and that the grave is a terrible place, but that still doesn’t qualify it for such a remarkable word such as “hell.” In all of the verses where these four words appear, not one of them talks about the

hells represented in some of the world’s great works of religious art.

Haides means, “gravedom – where a dead body is placed. She’owl means, gravedom, where a dead body is placed. Tartaros is reserved for spirits. Gehenna isn’t a grave at all. It is a place where trash is burned.

Haides gains its primary understanding and support from God’s original language, Hebrew. She’owl means exactly the same thing and is actually how we know how to translate haides. Hebrew is the Old Testament language; Greek is the New Testament language (and Aramaic too). God used She’owl long before he used Greek in describing “gravedom” in the same, quoted verses.

So, for our study verse, a better “first question” seems to be, “What does “hell” mean?”

“Hell” is translated from the Greek word haides, meaning, “gravedom.” “Gravedom” is where dead bodies are placed. Generally, this is in the ground, but it doesn’t have to be. Some people request cremation. Other’s request to be buried at sea. You get the idea. This Greek word never means, “hell.” If you can’t accept this, you should stop reading this right now, because it forms the basis of understanding of this delicate subject, both now, and for all of its future studies.

Just because a translator decided he wanted to promote his own perception of any certain subject, and then used a word that really didn’t apply, that doesn’t make it right. It is your responsibility to use a Greek dictionary and verify meanings. If you don’t, you won’t know if he was right or wrong. Before the computer, this task wasn’t the easiest, but now, no one has a good enough

# Hell Fire

excuse for not studying simple things like this. Haidēs means, “gravedom.” It never means “hell.” It never should have been translated “hell.” If it never would have been translated “hell,” we wouldn’t be having this discussion today. Think about it. Pretty amazing, isn’t it? When the translators decided, collectively for the most part, to promote their own doctrine in the Scriptures regarding the subject of hell, the entire world was cast in a fire that still burns to this day. And, there’s not one shred of Biblical evidence to prove their position, not one. But, that’s for another day. Let’s continue with Matthew 11:23.

Here you have a city that was “exalted” to heaven. Also, we are told that mighty works were done in that city, works so good, that if they had been done in Sodom (a really decadent place), Sodom would still have remained.

Because of its badness, Sodom’s destruction had been ordered by God. How should haidēs have been translated as it related to Capernaum? Quite simply, this marvelous city would eventually fall into ruin, hence, gravedom. Capernaum never made it to “hell,” but it did fall into ruin.

Luke also teaches about Capernaum.

**And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell. (Luke 10:15)**

Believe it or not, the word “hell” in this verse is translated from the same Greek word haidēs. The meaning is the same – gravedom.

If you choose to believe that the proper translation of the Greek word haidēs is “gravedom,” then you, too, will agree that these two

Gospel-based verses do not teach about hell or hellfire at all. They teach that this city will enter into a state of ruin as prophesized in the Bible.

The word “hell” appears 15 times in the Gospels. Today, we covered two of them. We’ll work through each of the rest in subsequent Artios Letters throughout this year.

I trust that you will be totally delivered from any fear of hell and hellfire as you take the time to work and deeply consider these teachings.

God bless you in Christ!

Jerry D. Brown