

Hot Topics

Hell

Your Neighbour Asks...?

How can a loving God send someone to hell?

Generous Orthodoxy

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- ❖ Agreement on the essentials
- ❖ Generosity on the non-essentials
- ❖ Biblically based



Three Views

- ❖ *Annihilationism*
- ❖ *Eternal Conscience Suffering*
- ❖ *Universalism (apokatastasis)*



Universalism

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- ❖ All people will be saved (eventually)
- ❖ Focuses on single attribute of God – His love
- ❖ Hell becomes a place of refining or purification
- ❖ Rejects the statements of Jesus

Hebrews 9:27–28

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²⁷Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

(TNIV)

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Questions for the Panel

- ❖ Collated during the break
- ❖ Presented to the panel in the Q & A session
- ❖ SMS all questions to 0414 639 862

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Allen Browne

*Raw data:
words translated Hell*

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What do you think?

- "I don't get it: how can a just God send people to hell to suffer forever? He tells us to love our enemies, but he fries his?"
- "I don't get it: how can a just God allow evil to go unchecked? Doesn't he have to sort it out some day?"

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Words translated hell (KJV):

γέεννα
Gehenna
ᾅδης
Hades

ταρταρόω
hold in Tartarus

Related metaphors: perish, (lake of) fire, judgement, darkness, abyss

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Occurrences:

	Gehenna (tinnom valley)	Hades (death)	Tartarus (netherworld)
Matt	5:22-30; 10:28 18:9; 23:15-33	11:23 16:18	
Mark	9:43-47		
Luke	12:5	10:15 16:23	
Acts		2:27-31	
James	3:6		
2 Peter			2:4
Rev		1:18; 6:8 20:13-14	



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Jeremiah 7

³⁰ "For the sons of Judah have done evil in my sight, declares the Lord. They have set their detestable things in the house that is called by my name, to defile it.

³¹ And they have built the high places of *Topheth*, which is in the *Valley of the Son of Hinnom*,

to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind....

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Jeremiah 7

³² Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when it will no more be called Topheth, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; for they will bury in Topheth, because there is no room elsewhere.

³³ And the dead bodies of this people will be food for the birds of the air, and for the beasts of the earth, and none will frighten them away.

³⁴ And I will silence in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, for the land shall become a waste.

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Jesus' use of Jeremiah's Gehenna

Lk 19 ⁴¹ And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴² saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

⁴³ For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side

⁴⁴ and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

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Jesus' use of Jeremiah's Gehenna

Mt 23 ³³ "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being **condemned to Gehenna?** ...

³⁵ And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berehiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

³⁶ Truly I tell you, all this will come on **this generation.**

³⁷ "**Jerusalem**, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.

³⁸ Look, **your house is left to you desolate.**

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Summary

Before you decide what hell means, understand the words:

- *Hades* = death.
- *Gehenna* = the valley where:
 - children were burned (in sacrifice),
 - soldiers' bodies were burned (in war).

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Tim Healy

Eternal Conscious Torment

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Eternal Conscious Torment

Definition:

This position says that the final end for the wicked is perpetual, conscious suffering as a result of the conscious rejection of God's self-revelation both in creation and in Christ. In the case of the uninformed it is seen as a consequence of 'original sin' (Augustine).

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The Development of ECT

- Tertullian (the "father of western theology") held this view and it was later adopted by both Augustine and Thomas Aquinas.
- John Calvin advocated conscious existence after death while Luther opted for the notion of "soul sleep".
- It was included in the Westminster Confession (1646, ch. XXXIII, *Of the Last Judgement*) and became widely accepted among Protestants.
- More recently popular writers such as C.S. Lewis and J.P. Moreland have defined hell in terms of "eternal, conscious, separation" with either limited punishment or no punishment.

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What is presupposed by ECT?

1. God alone possesses intrinsic immortality –
1Tim. 6:15, 16
 - "God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light..."
2. All human beings are given contingent immortality –
Acts 24:25
 - "I have the same hope in God as these men themselves have, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked".

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What is presupposed by ECT?

3. The righteous will enjoy eternal reward –
John 3:16
 - "For God so loved the world that he gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting (eternal) life"
4. The unrighteous will endure eternal punishment –
 - Matthew 25:41, 46
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9
 - Revelation 20:10, 15

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Scriptural support for ECT:

- Matthew 25:41, 46**
- [vs. 41] "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire [to pur to aionion] which has been prepared for the devil and his angels....'"
 - [vs. 46] "And these will go away into eternal punishment [kolasin aionion], but the righteous into life eternal [zoen aionion]."

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The language of the text:

- "Eternal" – (*aion, aionios, aionion*)
 - Used to describe a quality of the age to come
 - Used to describe the quality of God's existence
 - Used to denote a period of time (past only)
 - Used to denote perpetuity (time without end)
- "Punishment" – (*kolasin*)
 - <kolasin> appears twice in the NT and is translated as "punishment" (Matt. 25:46) and "torment" (1 John 4:18).

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Scriptural support for ECT:

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

- "This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish <didontos> those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer <tistouin> everlasting destruction and be shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might"

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Scriptural support for ECT:

Revelation 20:10, 15

- [vs. 20:10] "And the Devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented [basanisthesontai] day and night forever and ever [eis tous aionas ton aionon]."
- [vs. 20:15] "Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire".

The moral dilemma:

Is ECT irreconcilable with the character of a good and loving God?

- God's love should never be defined in isolation from His other attributes e.g. His holiness, righteousness, justice and wrath. God is considered loving precisely because He is these other things. A loving God must be a just God.
- God's love has been demonstrated in full in the person and work of His Son Jesus. He can be no more loving than what He has already been in Christ.
- Our self-serving sensibilities are not the yardstick for truth.

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Graham Irvine

Annihilationism

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Fire that Consumes – Annihilation

Definition:

This position says that the final end for the wicked is **they cease to exist in any form what-so-ever**. God uses a means of destruction that completely annihilates the wicked.

What is presupposed by "fire that consumes"?

- God alone possesses immortality -
1Tim. 6:15, 16 *God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light,*
- God gifts eternal life to the saved -
John 6:40 *For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."*
John 6:47 *Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life.*
Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

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Saved receive a gift – Eternal Life
So they can live forever

Unsaved receive - NO gift
So they cannot live forever, anywhere

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Biblical Defence:

The Old Testament:

➤ At least 70 metaphors and similes in the OT for the fate of the wicked

Ps 2:9	Ps 68:28	Ps 58:8
Ps 139:19	Ps 11:6	Ps 37:2
Ps 94:23	Ps 1:4	Ps 68:2

➤ The overall impression presented here is one of destruction.

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Biblical Defence:

- Divine prototypes
 - The Flood
 - Sodom and Gomorrah
- Predictions of Divine Judgement
 - Ps 2:7-9
 - Ps 110:5-6
 - Isa. 66:24
 - Mal. 4:1-3

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Biblical Defence:

- Intertestamental Period
- What does the New Testament say?

John 3:16

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not **perish** but have **eternal** life.*

Biblical Defence:

- *Eternal* – (*aion, aionios*)
 - Used to describe a quality of the age to come
- *Perish* – (*apollymi*)
 - rendered 33 times as perish,
 - 26 times as destroyed.
 - And comes with the ideas; to be put out of the way entirely; abolish; put an end to ruin; among others.

The sense is the same as the OT one of
destruction.

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Biblical Defence:

- Book of Acts – no mention of 'hell'
- Paul talks about – death, perish, destruction, eternal destruction, in reference to the final state of the wicked

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Biblical Defence:

• What of Punishment?

- 1 Thess. 1:9
- Jude 7
- James 1:15, 4:12, 5:3, 5, 19

"When a very serious crime is punished by death, and the execution of the sentence takes only a minute, no laws consider that minute as the measure of the punishment, but rather the fact that the criminal is forever removed from the community of the living." St Augustine

Where did the 'eternal torment' view come from?

- Tertullian first presented this view into the Church and it was later endorsed by both St. Augustine and St Aquinas.
- Luther – soul sleep, did not believe in the immortality of the soul
- Tyndale agreed with Luther
- Anabaptists mostly held a 'fire that consumes' position
- Calvin opposed the Anabaptists in all things including this so
- Heinrich Bellinger wrote the *Swiss Confession* from Calvin's perspective, so the traditional Catholic doctrine was written into the first Protestant Creed
 - Followed by the Westminster confession
 - Came to USA via Puritans
 - Part of Fundamentalist view

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Short Break

Last chance to ask a question

Questions and Answers

GROW FOR THE REIGN OF GOD'S KINGDOM

ACCELERATE

GROW LIVE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

FOUNDATIONS

Starts Monday May 7 at 7 p.m.
If you have not yet registered please do so tonight!

ACCELERATE – A Survey of the OT

Foundations Unit 2 – Jesus, Liberator and King
Foundations Unit 6 – Spiritual Growth

Next Hot Topic Night – July 2nd
Topic to be Announced (any suggestions?)

ACCELERATE Presents
Noah's Flood a scientific look at the historical event
Thursday May 3rd, 2012 Burswood campus