

Searching the Scriptures / 86 / Why Is One Damned To Hell? / Part 1

Our Bible study topic concerns the question posed by the Lord Jesus in Mat 23:33, “*How can ye escape the damnation of Hell?*” The three points to consider today are:

- 1. A Question for Every Human Being**
- 2. Man is a Two-Part Being**
- 3. Original Sin**

1. A Question for Every Human Being

In Matthew 23 we find the Lord Jesus Christ commenting to His disciples and the multitudes about the character of the religious leaders of his day. We read in Mat 23:1–3, “*Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.*” He told them to observe what they were told to do by these men in authority, but they were not to follow their example .

The scribes and Pharisees were only interested in outwardly appearing holy and righteous to others, like “*white-washed tombs*”, but inwardly as Jesus pointed out in Mat 23:27, they were “*full of dead men’s bones*”. In essence, they were spiritually dead, and on their way to Hell. That is why the Lord Jesus asked the question in verse 33, “*Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*”

One might wrongly presume that Jesus’ question was merely for religious leaders—whether in Jesus’ day or ours. In our spiritual pride and arrogance we might be quick to judge these men as hypocrites—after all, look at their lives! However, this question is for every human being, that individually we might be confronted with its truth. In fact, the question demands an answer, and as we shall presently discover, the only solution is outside the realm of human achievement. This is readily seen as Jesus replied to the disciples’ question, “*Who then can be saved?*” in Mark 10:26–27: “*... And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.*”

Let’s start by examining this crucial issue by asking another obvious question, “Why is one damned to Hell?”

2. Man is a Two-Part Being

Let’s take a closer look at man. He is really a two-part being with a mortal body and an immortal soul. All human beings are born physically alive but spiritually dead. This is one of the greatest truths in the Bible—and yet, one of the saddest. God describes how that happened in great detail in the first few pages of the Bible, and that theme is woven throughout all of God’s Word. Not one human being after Adam and Eve—nor this present universe that God spoke into existence—has been left untouched by its deadly influence. Only Jesus Christ, who is none other than God in human flesh, was able to overcome God’s curse of eternal death for those He came to save.

Psa 51:5 states , “*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*” We also read in Eph 2:1,

“*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.*” The English word, “*quicken*ed” means to be made alive spiritually in one’s soul. If someone is not a child of God—though his brain is working and his heart is pumping blood throughout his body—his soul, which is invisible, is as dead as a corpse buried six feet under ground.

3. Original Sin

This is the spiritual condition that all of us are born into as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. And lest we be too harsh on Adam and Eve, consider that any of us would have done exactly as they did in that situation. The reason is because they, as our first parents, represented each member of the human race. Let me carefully repeat these important truths: We are sinners from conception, and from that point forward we manifest our sinful nature by our thoughts, words, and actions.

Consider the experience of Isaiah the prophet who, when confronted with the glory of God, could only express his utter sinfulness by exclaiming “*Woe is me!*”, which means, “*I deserve to be cast into Hell!*” We see this in Isa 6:1–5: “*In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.*”

Standing as guilty sinners before a Holy, Perfect God, we must understand that our only truthful response is to admit that we too, as Isaiah, deserve the just punishment of Hell. We must contemplate Jesus’ words, “*How can ye escape the damnation of Hell?*”