

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

December 10, 2013

Issue No. 122 Mark Aites, Editor

Hell

"The safest road to Hell is the gradual one – the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts." – C.S. Lewis

"If the destination is heaven, why do we scramble to be first in line for hell? – Douglas Horton

"The road to hell is paved with good intentions." – Karl Marx

"Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise; Brothers, lift your voices, loud your anthems raise." – Sabine Baring-Gould, *Onward Christian Soldiers*

One can stand truly amazed at the number of quotes that exist about hell in which people make fun of the idea. It is truly appalling to hear people talk about hell as a favorable place. One casual remark was, "I don't want to go to heaven because I won't know anybody there."

The devil has done a superb job in convincing folks that Hell is a myth. The most popular modern contention is that "we live in a hell on earth."

Hell is very real. Jesus used the Greek term *gehenna* based on the ancient Valley of Hinnom. It was in that valley that great sin occurred; even the sacrificing of little children (Jer. 32:35). By the time of the first century, it was a garbage dump outside of the city of Jerusalem that had fires which burned day and night. What better place to illustrate the horrors of hell?

Jesus described Hell as a place where the "worm does not die and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:44). The prophet Isaiah spoke of "everlasting burnings" (Isa. 33:14). There is the reference to "the fiery furnace" (Matt. 13:50). The apostle Paul wrote of "everlasting destruction" (2 Thess. 1:9). Revelation 14:11 speaks of "the smoke of their torment." And John gives us the reference to it as "the second death" (Rev. 20:14), and, "the lake which burns with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8).

The Lord gives us the account of Matthew 25, in which He speaks of the Son of Man in the judgment dividing "the sheep from the goats." Such reminds us of Jesus' statement: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).

Knowing that Hell is very real, it is absolutely vital that we do everything we can to avoid it. And it is essential that we let people know that it is not something to joke about. God tells us that it is real, and we know that He cannot lie (Titus 1:2).