

# FAQ

**FROM THE MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS ARCHIVES (2000-2018)**

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**MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS**  
messianicapologetics.net

# Frequently Asked Questions

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# Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

- ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*  
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*  
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)  
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament  
Ara: Aramaic  
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)  
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)  
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)  
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.  
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)  
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*  
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.  
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)  
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)  
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)  
CJB: *Complete Jewish Bible* (1998)  
CJSB: *Complete Jewish Study Bible* (2016)  
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition  
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls  
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*  
EJ: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*  
ESV: *English Standard Version* (2001)  
Ger: German  
GNT: *Greek New Testament*  
Grk: Greek  
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)  
HCSB: *Holman Christian Standard Bible* (2004)  
Heb: Hebrew  
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible  
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*  
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*  
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*  
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*  
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)  
JBK: *New Jerusalem Bible-Koren* (2000)  
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*  
KJV: *King James Version*  
Lattimore: *The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore* (1996)  
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)  
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)  
LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)  
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)  
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)  
LXX: *Septuagint*  
m. Mishnah  
MT: *Masoretic Text*  
NASB: *New American Standard Bible* (1977)  
NASU: *New American Standard Update* (1995)  
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*  
NEB: *New English Bible* (1970)  
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*  
NETS: *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007)  
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*  
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*  
NIV: *New International Version* (1984)  
NJB: *New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic* (1985)  
NJSB: *Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (1999)  
NKJV: *New King James Version* (1982)  
NRSV: *New Revised Standard Version* (1989)  
NLT: *New Living Translation* (1996)  
NT: *New Testament*  
OT: *Old Testament*  
REB: *Revised English Bible* (1989)  
RSV: *Revised Standard Version* (1952)  
t. Tosefta  
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament  
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*  
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*  
TLV: *Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version* (2014)  
TNIV: *Today's New International Version* (2005)  
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*  
UBSHNT: *United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition*  
v(s). *verse(s)*  
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*  
Vul: *Latin Vulgate*  
YLT: *Young's Literal Translation* (1862/1898)  
WMB: *World Messianic Bible* (2020)

# Hell, Metaphorical View

## What does your ministry think about the metaphorical view of eternal punishment? Could you explain this view to me more fully?

The **metaphorical view** of eternal punishment has a longstanding acceptance within much of Protestant theology since the Reformation, even though many of today's Messianic people have never even heard of it. The rise of the acceptance of **annihilation**, the belief that the unrighteous condemned will suffer extinction from existence, has largely been in response to the abuses of the **literal view** of eternal punishment. The literal view advocates that the unrighteous condemned will have to suffer in an everlasting bath of being pummeled with fire and brimstone. Viewing this as a bit sadistic on the part of a loving God, annihilationists in response have advocated that the wicked will be obliterated from existence. Criticisms have necessarily been issued against annihilationism, for its inconsistencies in how it approaches the term "eternal."

The metaphorical view of eternal punishment and the literal view do share one important element in common: both positions advocate that the wicked will suffer for a never-ending eternity removed from God's presence. The main difference is that the metaphorical view of eternal punishment tries to give a much fairer hearing to *all the descriptions* presented in Scripture about the final destiny of the wicked. Whereas the literal view tends to focus almost exclusively on descriptions of eternal punishment as fire and smoke, the metaphorical view also takes into account the descriptions of eternal punishment as involving worms, outer darkness, and banishment. In his observations on Mark 9:44, 48,<sup>1</sup> Bruce Milne summarizes the various elements for us as follows:

"Hell is here 'fire [that] never goes out' (v. 44), a place where 'their worm does not die' (v. 48), and 'fire is not quenched' (v. 48) Elsewhere hell is a place of 'darkness' or 'outer darkness' (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30; 2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 14); 'a lake of fire' (Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8); a place where we can be 'beaten with blows' (Luke 12:47); a condition which evokes 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' (Matt. 8:12; 13:42; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30); a fate describable as being 'shut out from the presence of the Lord' (2 Thes. 1:9).

"However, even when we affirm that this language is metaphorical, and the suffering concerned is accordingly essentially mental and spiritual rather than physical, the presence of some profound degree of conscious anguish is inescapable. Hell is terrible by any measure and, as Jesus indicates, everything is worth sacrificing in order to avoid it. There is no more terrible prospect conceivable than of being consigned to hell."<sup>2</sup>

Advocates of the **metaphorical view** of eternal punishment, ultimately view all of the descriptions given of the fate of the wicked, as implying eternal banishment or separation from God. While Revelation 22:14 says, "Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city" (NASU), Revelation 22:15 further says, "Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying" (NASU). The latter group is excluded from being a part of the Kingdom of God—removed from the presence of the King of Kings for all eternity.

With time and space as human beings today know them being essentially gone in the Eternal State, the descriptions witnessed of eternal punishment in the Bible have to be recognized to possess limitations. This is

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<sup>1</sup> "where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED" (Mark 9:44/48, NASU).

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Milne, *The Message of Heaven & Hell* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), pp 149-150.

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something recognized by the **metaphorical view**, and hopefully in future discussions on eternal punishment in our Messianic faith community, this position will be able to have a much better hearing.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The metaphorical view is best summarized by William V. Crockett, in William V. Crockett, ed., *Four Views on Hell* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), pp 43-76.