

Having noted all of the uses of γέεννα in the New Testament, what are we able to conclude from a study of its usage in context? It would appear that we can say that γέεννα is a place of condemnation and terrible punishment, into which the wicked, following the reunion of their physical bodies and disembodied souls/spirits, will be cast, there to remain forever.

In addition to these instances of the use of γέεννα, there are some other Scriptures and terms that speak of the final state of the unrighteous. Let us note the following:

Revelation 20:11-15 -- "And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. (ἡ λίμνη τοῦ πυρός) And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

Those who previously died, whose souls/spirits are released from ᾗδης to be reunited to their resurrected physical bodies, are brought before God's great white throne, their names are found to be missing from the pages of the book of life, they are judged on the basis of their works (which suggests degrees of punishment commensurate with the heinousness of their sins), and are cast into the lake of fire, thus experiencing a living death, called the second death.

Matthew 25:31-34, 41, 46 -- "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right and the goats on the left. Then the king will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire (τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον) which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;' . . . And these will go away into eternal punishment (κόλασιν αἰώνιον), but the righteous into eternal life.

On the basis of their response to Christ and His message, demonstrated by their attitude toward and treatment of His disciples, the wicked are sent into eternal punishment, characterized by eternal fire. Again, this is connected with God's throne of judgment.

Matthew 8:11-12 -- "And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; (εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον) in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων)

Expressions similar to these may be found in Matthew 22:13 and 25:30. But what do they imply?