

## Visions Of Hell

I delayed publishing this book for years because this subject bothered me. Mostly because there are godly people I respect greatly who have had visions of hell. And while their particular experiences were short on details, they did portray hell as a bad place that does exist.

There are many published accounts of people who believe they have visited hell, or seen a vision of hell. Being deeply interested in the subject, I have read or watched all of them I could find, and there are many.

These stories vary greatly. Some may be excused as simply a bad dream, a nightmare. Others probably involved out-of-body or even life-after-death experiences.

One thing can be said for certain -- not one of them stayed in hell, but came back to tell us their experience -- whatever it was they saw or experienced!

Several of these people claimed to have died. Yet when they called on God, even if they were in a place of torment, they were delivered.

God gave His Word as our standard, so we could judge concerning truth. His written Word is what we must use to judge all visions, dreams, revelations, prophecies, or messages of any kind.

2 PETER 1:18-19 KJV

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

Peter experienced a heavenly visitation, hearing a voice from heaven, yet he says the written Word of Scripture is more sure.

So even what may be given to us by a messenger from Heaven must still be judged by the written Word of God.

GALATIANS 1:8 KJV

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

REVELATION 12:9 KJV

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

The Bible says the devil is a deceiver, and even that he deceived the whole world. Some of the accounts of hell I have heard are no doubt demonic deceptions, for they do not line up with God's Word and God's character as revealed in Jesus Christ. The Bible says the devil can appear as an angel of light, so every vision is not of God.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:14 KJV

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

The word translated angel is also translated as messenger. So that verse could include the idea of satan impersonating Jesus. I met a pastor who told me this happened to him. He said a deceiving spirit had appeared, claiming to be Jesus Christ. What the deceiving spirit spoke mostly agreed with the Word of God, but not completely. It was a little twisted. But if this pastor had not been familiar with the Bible, he could have been deceived.

Our only real defense against deception is a clear understanding of and adherence to the written Word of God.

No doubt most of the people who had visions of hell and came back telling us it is a place of eternal torture are sincere. It is possible some of them truly experienced a supernatural visitation. But no matter how sincere they are, or how supernatural their experience may have been, it does not prove they were not deceived. The devil is clearly labeled a deceiver in Revelation 12:9, so we should not be surprised at the idea.

God gave His Word to protect us from deception, but our English Bible translations have failed us in this area because of the translation of *aion* with words meaning eternal. So when sincere believers had supernatural experiences that seemed to line up with the teaching of their English Bibles on hell being a place of eternal torture, they had no reason to suspect it of being a deception. This wrong understanding of what the Bible says, based on an imperfect translation of *aion*, has left even sincere believers vulnerable to deception in this area.