

I am happy to say as that we move toward publication of my book, my publisher has just issued a press release to announce that it's coming soon. The release includes several endorsements by experts, which are always gratifying to see, and brief comments taken from the early reviews done by journals that announce and evaluate forthcoming books to booksellers, bookstores, and publishers. It's a nice release, I think. Here 'tis.

News from Simon & Schuster

1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020

Publicity Contact: Cat Boyd

(212) 698-7183 / cat.boyd@simonandschuster.com

*From the New York Times Bestselling Author of
Misquoting Jesus and The Triumph of Christianity*

HEAVEN AND HELL

A History of the Afterlife

BART D. EHRMAN

Simon & Schuster | March 31, 2020 | \$28 | Hardcover | 9781501136733

"Ehrman's twin strengths are deep knowledge and an accessible style.
This displays both in spades."

— **Booklist**

"Ehrman's eloquent understanding of how death is viewed through many spiritual traditions is scintillating, fresh, and will appeal to scholars and lay readers alike."

— **Publisher's Weekly, STARRED REVIEW**

"A readable book of popular Christianity."

— **Kirkus Reviews**

"Expect delightful, informative examinations of ancient ideas about heaven and hell; ideas that have evolved as human needs and desires have also evolved."

— **Library Journal, STARRED REVIEW**

"Ehrman writes like a storyteller, and he rivals Dante's Virgil as a guide into mysterious realms."

— **Brian D. McLaren, author of *The Great Spiritual Migration***

"Provocative, personal, and packed with fascinating details. Ehrman's lively tour of Greek philosophy, early Jewish sources, the Gospels, Paul's letters, Revelation, and later Christian notions of eternal reward and everlasting torment educates, entertains, and for those concerned about the afterlife, ultimately consoles."

— **Amy-Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies, Vanderbilt University**

“There’s no one I’d rather read on what Christians believe, and why they believe it, than Bart Ehrman. This is a wise and fascinating book.”

— **Tom Bissell, author of *Apostle***

According to a recent Pew Research poll, 72% of Americans believe in a literal heaven and 58% in a literal hell. This is also a world-wide phenomenon: there are over two billion Christians who follow Jesus, and most believe that because of their faith, they will have a glorious afterlife. Whether believers or not, nearly everyone wonders about what, if anything, comes after death, and speculation continues to feature in popular culture, like in the recently concluded and critically acclaimed “The Good Place.” In **HEAVEN AND HELL**, Ehrman investigates the powerful instincts that gave rise to the common ideas of heaven and hell and that help them endure. He comes to surprising and unexpected conclusions: neither place of the afterlife was taught in the Old Testament or even in the teachings of Jesus himself.

From the Epic of Gilgamesh to the writings of Augustine, Ehrman recounts the long history of the life after death. In different times, places, and cultures, people held a wide variety of views, and Ehrman is adept at showing how these influenced one another and changed in response to their historical, social, and cultural situations. His driving question is why and how Christians came up with the idea that souls will experience either eternal bliss or everlasting torment – or even purgatorial pain. Ehrman shows that the historical Jesus, Paul, and the author of Revelation would have been utterly perplexed by such ideas. These ideas are later Christian developments.

Of course, Bart Ehrman can’t tell us what *actually* happens after we die. As a young Christian, he believed with absolute certainty in a literal heaven and a hell, and feared for his own fate after death. As an adult, Ehrman lost the comfort that came with certainty – but he eventually found it again, and explains why in the closing of this book. **HEAVEN AND HELL** concludes that some of the world’s greatest thinkers, including Jesus, believed there could be something to look forward to after death, but that there is certainly nothing to fear.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bart D. Ehrman is a leading authority on the New Testament and the history of early Christianity, and the author or editor of more than thirty books, including the *New York Times* bestsellers *Misquoting Jesus*, *How Jesus Became God*, and *The Triumph of Christianity*. A Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, he has created eight popular audio and video courses for The Great Courses. He has been featured in *Time*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Washington Post*, and has appeared on NBC, CNN, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, the History Channel, the National Geographic Channel, BBC, and NPR. His most recent book is *Heaven and Hell*.

HEAVEN AND HELL: A History of the Afterlife

Bart D. Ehrman

On Sale March 31, 2020

\$28.00 Hardcover

ISBN: 9781501136733

E-Book ISBN: 9781501136757

FOR INTERVIEW OR REVIEW REQUESTS, PLEASE CONTACT:

Cat Boyd / 212-698-7183 / Cat.Boyd@simonandschuster.com



[Brief Video Promotion of Heaven and Hell](#)

[A "Newly Discovered" "Gospel": Was Jesus Married with Children?](#)