

Forty-Eight Hours in Hell

The story of one man's after-death experience.

By George Lennox

Uncertainties of the afterlife have plagued mankind for centuries. While many cultures have developed extensive theories of what happens, God, in His divine wisdom, chose to leave the details of life-after-death veiled. This is a first-hand account of what happened to one man. We do not pretend to solve the mystery.

In 1887, George Lennox was in prison for stealing horses. While he was a prisoner, the roof of the room where he was working in the coal mines fell in and completely buried him. When he was found two hours later, there were no signs of life.

The prison physician officially pronounced him dead. Hours later, as two prisoners were carrying his body to the coffin, they dropped the corpse. To the surprise of all present, a deep groan was heard. Soon the eyes opened. Next he called for a cup of water. An examination showed he had only a broken leg and bruises.

This is Lennox's story of what happened while he was dead:

"As I was working, suddenly it grew dark. Then it seemed as if a great iron door swung open and I passed through the doorway.

"The thought came that I was dead and in another world. I could see no one nor hear any sound. I traveled some distance until I came to the bank of a broad river. Soon I heard oars in the water, and a person rowed up to me. He told me to get into the boat, and then rowed to the other side. Not a word was spoken. I longed to ask who he was and where I was, but my tongue clung to the roof of my mouth. At the opposite shore, I got out of the boat, and the boatman vanished.

"I saw two roads which led through a dark valley. One of these was broad and seemed to be well traveled. The other was a narrow path that led off in another direction. I instinctively followed the well-beaten road. I had not gone far when it grew darker. However, a light flashing in the distance lit my journey.

"Presently I was met by a being that was utterly indescribable. He resembled a man, but was much larger. On his back were great wings. He was as black as the coal I had been digging, and was without clothing.

"In his hand was a spear with a handle fifteen feet long. His eyes shone like balls of fire. His teeth seemed an inch long. His nose, if you could call it that, was large, broad, and flat. His hair was coarse and long. His voice sounded more like the growls of a lion.

"I first saw him in one of those flashes of light. He had his spear raised as if to send it flying through me. With that terrible voice, he bade me follow him. I followed. What else could I do?



"After some distance, a huge perpendicular mountain rose up before us. On it I could read, 'This is Hell.' My guide gave three loud raps on the wall with his spear handle. A massive door swung back and we entered.

"For some time we traveled in Egyptian darkness. I could hear the heavy footfalls of my guide, and thus followed him. I could also hear deep groans and cries for water.

"Presently another door opened at the knock of my guide, and a broad plain lay out before me. Here my guide left, and a similar being came to me. Instead of a spear he had a large sword.

"He spoke with a voice that struck terror to my soul. 'Thou art in Hell,' said he. 'For thee all hope is fled. The lake of fire is soon to be thy doom. Before thou art conducted to this place of torment nevermore to emerge, thou shalt be permitted to behold what thou might have enjoyed, instead of what thou must suffer.'

"With this I was left alone. My strength departed, and I sank down a helpless mass. Half awake, half asleep, I seemed to dream.

"Far above me, I saw the City of which we read in the Bible. How beautiful were its walls of jasper! I saw vast plains covered with beautiful flowers and beheld the river of life and the sea of glass. Multitudes of angels passed through the gates of the City, singing beautiful songs. I saw my mother, who had died of a broken heart because of my wickedness. She looked toward me and seemed to beckon me to her, but I could not move. There appeared to be a great weight upon me that held me down. I said, 'Oh, that I might be one of them.'

"Suddenly, I was aroused from my slumbers by an inmate of my dark abode. He said it was time to enter upon my future career.

"We reentered the dark passageway in the mountain, and went through a door in the side. Then we passed through another door, and I beheld the lake of fire.

"As far as the eye could reach, I could see that literal lake of fire and brimstone. Huge billows of fire rolled over each other, and great waves of fiery flames dashed against one another and leaped high in the air. On the crest of the waves I saw human beings rise, soon to be carried down again to the lowest depths. When borne on the crest of these awful billows, their curses against God were appalling, and their cries for water heart-rending.

"I turned my eyes to the door through which I had entered and read these words: 'This is thy doom; eternity never ends.' The ground began to give way beneath my feet, and I found myself sinking down into the lake of fire. An indescribable thirst seized me. Calling for water, my eyes opened in the prison hospital.

"There is a Heaven and a Hell, the kind the Bible tells about. One thing is certain, I am never going to Hell again.

"As soon as I opened my eyes in the hospital and found that I was on earth once more, I gave my heart to God. I am going to live and die a Christian. While the terrible sight of Hell can never be banished from my memory, neither can the beautiful things of Heaven that I saw. What I saw in Heaven will more than compensate my giving up the sensual pleasures in which I indulged before coming to the prison."