

# THE TRUTH ABOUT HELL - PART 2 - DOES HELL BURN FOREVER?

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Before we look into the Bible truth as to what will happen to the wicked, let us first take a look at the commonly used scripture verses that mainstream Christianity uses to support this 'eternal hell fire' teaching of theirs.

**VERSE USED** - Revelation 14:11 ...'And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.'

Now let us look at the above verse in connection with a verse in Isaiah ... *Isaiah 34:8-10* ...'*For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.*'

Do you see what Isaiah is saying about 'hell fire'? 'The STREAMS turn into pitch. The DUST turns into brimstone. The LAND becomes burning pitch.' Isaiah is talking about EARTH. Hell fire will be ON EARTH as we learned in Part 1. And yet we know the earth will be made new (Isaiah 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13), which means that hell fire CANNOT BURN FOR ETERNITY.

Do you know what 'for ever' in Revelation 14:11 means? It means '*for an unbroken age*', or for as long as that person lives. Let us look at the example of Hannah and Samuel in the Old Testament:

*1 Samuel 1:22* ...'*But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever.*'

Now does this 'forever' mean that Samuel would actually serve God for a literal eternity in the temple? No. The word 'forever' simply means 'for a certain unbroken time' or 'for as long as he lives', or until he dies. The same meaning applies to the verse in Revelation concerning the smoke of burning. It will ascend up 'forever' - or an unbroken time, until that wicked person dies and the fire has nothing left to burn.

**VERSE USED** - Daniel 12:2 ...'And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.'

Does this verse say that the wicked will be resurrected and thrown into the fire to burn for evermore? No, it says that they are raised to everlasting contempt. Now if God destroys them completely in the lake of fire and they die, never to live again, could this also mean 'everlasting contempt'? Yes or course. It is the **RESULT** that is everlasting - the 'second DEATH' (Rev.20:14) never to be any more, leaving neither root nor branch (Malachi 4:1).

**VERSE USED** - Matthew 18:8-9 ...'Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.'

This is an interesting one. The mainstream teaching says that it is the so called 'eternal souls' of the lost which burn in hell for all eternity. And yet Jesus clearly says in the verses above that the lost will be cast into 'hell fire' **WHOLE BODIED**, which He confirms in Matthew 5:29. So it is not just the 'soul' of someone which gets cast into the fire. The lost are cast into the lake of fire at the end with their whole bodies. And what happens to a body when it is cast into fire? It 'burns up' (Malachi 4).

But what about the fact that it says 'everlasting fire'? The **BIG** misunderstanding with this is the **MEANING** of everlasting fire. Please think about this. Did Jesus say that the lost will 'BURN FOR ALL ETERNITY'? No He didn't. He said that they will be cast into a fire that would be 'everlasting'. If someone burns up and dies in that fire, never to live again, would that fire to them be 'everlasting'? Of course it would! It is the **RESULT** of the fire that is everlasting!

Remember! The final fires that destroy the wicked are **ON EARTH** as we learned in [part 1](#). So if those fires burn forever, then this earth can **NEVER** be renewed for the saints to live on. Do you see the problem?

**VERSE USED** - Matthew 25:41,46 ...'Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels ... And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.'

What many people do not realize is the Bible reveals that Satan himself will be completely destroyed and turned to dust! In Ezekiel 28:18-19 the prophet is talking about Satan, and he reveals that Satan will be **DEVoured** by the fire. He will turn into **ASHES** and he will **BE NO MORE**. Which means Satan is completely destroyed! So what is 'everlasting punishment'? It means that the lost will be destroyed forever and they will never live again

**VERSE USED** - 2 Thessalonians 1:9 ...'Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.'

I'm amazed that this verse is even used, because it supports the truth that the wicked are **DESTROYED**, rather than burning in hell fire for all eternity. What does 'everlasting DESTRUCTION' mean? It means something is destroyed forever. Never to live again. So this verse actually goes against the mainstream teaching.

*Revelation 20:14 ...'And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.' ... Does 'death' now mean life? Look at the finality of what is being said here. EVERYTHING bad is destroyed, so that the universe can now be a place of peace, joy and righteousness as 2 Peter 3:13 clearly confirms.*

Before we go on, let me clarify that the Word of God in the Bible does not contradict itself. So what do we do? We need to take into account the whole picture of what happens to the lost in the Bible and then the difficult, unclear verses that appear to contradict, will become a lot clearer as to what they actually mean. So let's delve into this and find out the real Bible truth about hell fire.

## **BIBLE TRUTH ABOUT BURNING IN HELL FIRE**

*John 3:16 ...'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not PERISH, but have everlasting LIFE.'*

Jesus clearly said there are two options. You can either follow Him and gain eternal LIFE. Or don't follow Him and PERISH. Now we all know what the word perish means right? A COMPLETE END.

*Jeremiah 17:27 ...'But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.'*

What did God say the punishment would be for the city of Jerusalem if the people would not hallow His holy 7th day sabbath? He said the city would burn with 'UNQUENCHABLE FIRE'. Is Jerusalem still burning today? No, the fire simply kept burning UNTIL it did its job of completely destroying the city. And this is the very same meaning as the New Testament teaching of 'everlasting fire'. It will CONTINUE burning UNTIL it has done its job of destroying the wicked.

*Malachi 4:1-3 ...'For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.'*

Friend, this is the clear Word of the Lord above. What happens to the wicked? They are 'burned up'. How much of a plant or flower is left after you have destroyed its roots and branches? Nothing!! God clearly says in Malachi above that the wicked will have neither root or branch left, there's nothing left. Are you getting this amazing truth? Nothing left! Does this sound like people will burn forever in hell fire? Not at all.

*Psalm 68:2 ...'As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.'*

*Psalm 37:10 ...'For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.'*

*Psalm 37:20 ...'But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.'* ... The Psalmist wrote about what would happen to the wicked, and he was pretty clear about it, don't you think? The wicked shall 'perish', and will come to a complete end.

Have a careful think about the following three verses:

*Jude 1:7 ...'Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, **suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.**'*

*2 Peter 2:6 ...'And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha **into ashes** condemned them with an overthrow, **making them an example** unto those that after should live ungodly.'*

*Lamentations 4:6 ...'For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was **overthrown as in a moment**, and no hands stayed on her.'*

Put the pieces together from the above 3 verses. What was the result of eternal fire on Sodom and Gomorrah? They were destroyed! The fire from God was so fierce that it turned the cities (including the people) into 'ashes' and they were 'overthrown in a moment'. Are Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed? Yes! Are they still burning today? No! So what does eternal hell fire mean? Well, we can see from these Bible verses that it is the effect of the flames that is eternal, not the flames themselves.

*2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 ...'In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with **everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.'* ... Paul agrees with Jesus and says that the wicked are punished with 'everlasting destruction'. Now if someone told you that someone was destroyed with everlasting destruction, would you think that they were still alive? Paul cannot be any clearer here. The wicked are destroyed completely forever.

Are you starting to see what everlasting hell fire is all about? The fire will 'burn up' the lost. They will have neither 'root or branch' left. They will be completely destroyed 'forever'. Let us continue with this Bible study of God's truth about hell fire and '*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*' (Jude 1:3)

## **ARE THE LOST BURNING IN HELL NOW?**

Many Christians believe that those who have died and are lost, are burning right now in hell, because they believe this false teaching of the immortal soul. If so, then that means they have already received their reward for what they did. Does the Word of God in the Bible agree with this?

*Luke 14:14 ...'And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.'*

*Matthew 16:27 ...'For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.'*

*Revelation 22:12 ...'And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.'*

It seems that God does NOT agree with them. As we can clearly see in the above 3 verses, everyone receives their reward and judgment only after the second coming of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. So where are the people who have passed away 'dwelling' now?

*Daniel 12:2 ...'And many of them that **sleep** in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' ... They are sleeping, awaiting the return of Jesus. After all, 'from dust we were made and to dust we shall return.'*

*John 5:28-29 ...'Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are **in the graves** shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.' ... No need to marvel at this, Jesus says it is a simple truth. He doesn't say, those who are in hell and those who are in Heaven will come forward to receive their reward. Where does Jesus say they come from? The grave! The saved and lost who have passed away are in the SAME PLACE now, the grave.*

*1 John 5:12 ...'He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.' ... If the lost burn forever in hell, then they would have life, but the Word of God confirms that it is only those who have Christ Jesus that have life. Those who don't follow Jesus have 'not life'. In other words, death.*

## **THE WICKED PERISH**

*Matthew 3:12 ...'but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.' ... Well, what is unquenchable fire? ... Isaiah 47:14 ...'Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; **they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame.**' ... Friend, you have the truth of God's Word right there. 'Everlasting fire' is 'unquenchable fire', which means the wicked, as it says above in Isaiah, will 'not be able to deliver themselves from it'. Everlasting hell fire means that no man can put it out, it will CONTINUE to burn UNTIL it has 'burned up' every last wicked person, including satan himself.*

*Psalms 68:2 ...'As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.'*

*Luke 13:3 ...'I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'*

*2 Peter 2:12 ...'But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall **utterly perish** in their own corruption.' ... We all know what 'perish' means. A Complete end! Peter even goes one step further to confirm it with 'utterly perish'.*

*John 3:15-16 ... 'That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'* ... According to those who believe in a literal eternal hell, the two routes for us are either eternal life in heaven, or eternal life in hell. Now something is wrong there. What did Jesus say the two routes are? One is eternal life, the other is to perish (death).

If the lost burn in hell fire for eternity, then it means they will be immortal, but what does the Word of God say about this ... *1 Corinthians 15:53-54 ... 'For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.'* ... We are in a mortal state now, and can be destroyed completely. It is only through Jesus that we inherit immortality, therefore the lost do not inherit immortality and as a consequence, they are destroyed in hell fire.

*1 Timothy 6:14-16 ... 'our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; **Who only hath immortality.**'*

*Revelation 21:6-8 ... 'And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the **second death.**'* ..... IT IS DONE! God is the beginning and the end. God gives eternal life (beginning) to those who overcame, but He will bring the wicked to an end. Hell fire and the lake of fire is the same thing. Remember from earlier that the lake of fire is ON the earth? God will cast all the wicked into that fire and what will happen to them? They will DIE the SECOND DEATH. The 'wages of sin is death' (Romans 6:23).

Friend, this is the Bible truth about hell fire. God's Word clearly teaches that hell fire will not last for eternity, it is just the result that will be eternal. Remember, the wicked will be 'burned up', they will become 'ashes' and they will 'utterly perish'. And where will this happen? 'On the breadth of the earth'. And then God will 'renew the heavens and the earth' and the wicked will 'be no more'. David knew the truth about this ... *Psalm 37:20 ... 'But the wicked shall **perish**, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; **into smoke shall they consume away.**'*

Just as in Noah's day, God cleansed the wicked from the earth with the flood. And one day soon, as we are now living in the end times, God will cleanse the earth again, but this time with fire, and when the wicked are consumed, the fire will go out, just as it says in *Revelation 21:4 ... 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: **for the former things are passed away.**'*

Notice also above God reveals the truth that there will be no more pain. If the wicked are to burn in hell fire forever, there would be plenty of pain! Thankfully, the Bible is something we can trust. Friend, put your trust in the Word of God and not in the teaching of man. Don't just

trust what your preacher says, but test everything against the Word of God in the Bible yourself. Many are being kept from the kingdom because they have been taught the error that God will burn the lost for all eternity, and they don't want to serve a God like that. So please share this important truth, that the lost WILL burn in the lake of fire if they do not turn to Christ, but they will 'burn up', and cease to exist. THAT is good news!