



The Truth about Hellfire

Bible Study Pathways

Lesson 11

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A Story to Ponder...

Christian awoke in a cold sweat and stricken with terror. He tried to erase the vivid images of the suffering and unutterable anguish of the people writhing in the eternal flames of hellfire from his memory. Could it really be true, that God would torture people forever? Surely, the pastor knew what he was talking about. But the picture of God as a revengeful tyrant plunging the wicked into an eternally burning hellfire had literally been a nightmare. He had to find out the truth if he was ever going to be able to get some sleep. Perhaps he could gain some comfort from John 3:16.



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 died so that man would not _____, but have everlasting life.



To perish means that something is gone or destroyed. The opposite of eternal life is eternal death, not an eternal life of torment.



Jude says Sodom and Gomorrah are set forth for an _____.



Jude 1:7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, 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.



What are Sodom and Gomorrah turned into _____.



2 Peter 2:6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;



Even though Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24, 25) are said to have suffered the vengeance of eternal fire, they are not still burning. Instead the resulting destruction lasts forever. In the Bible, the word eternal or forever can sometimes mean "until completed." (Ex. 21:6; 1 Sam. 1:22; Jonah 2:6)



Compare 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;



Is hell burning now? 2 Peter 2:9 says the unjust are _____ unto the day of judgement. 2 Peter 3:7 says the earth is reserved or _____



2 Peter 2:9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

2 Peter 3:6,7 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.



What does God destroy in the fires of hell? Both _____ and _____.



Matt. 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.



Who else will perish in the fires of hell? The _____ and his _____.



Matt 25:41,46 Then shall he [The King] 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.



According to Mark 9:45 hell is a fire "that never shall be quenched." But Jer. 17:27 also speaks of fire in the palaces of Jerusalem that "shall not be quenched." Again, this just signifies the fire burning, unable to be put out until it has finished its work.



The Bible is clear that the wicked shall be as _____ and _____.

The fire will burn them up until nothing is left.



Mal 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... 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.



David was pained when he saw the wicked prospering but he says he understood the end of the wicked by looking in the _____.



Psalm 73:12, 16,17 Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.... When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.



Psalm 37:20 says the wicked, like the fat of lambs, will _____; into smoke _____.



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.



GOOD NEWS -2 Peter 3:9 says "The Lord is... is longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing that any should perish**, but that all should come to repentance.



Ezekiel 33:11 tells God's position toward the wicked. "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"



Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CONCLUSION

The Bible gives us the choice of eternal life or eternal death. When we bring together all the scriptures about hell there is no foundation for an eternally burning hell. God is not a tyrant, just waiting to torture those who disobey, but rather a loving Father encouraging us to turn away from our sins and choose life through the gift of His Son Jesus Christ.