

PATHWAY TO PEACE: BIBLE STUDY GUIDE – LESSON 26**Lesson 26: “Hell Fire, The Strangest Act of God”**

Jesus came to save sinners like you and me. He came that we might have eternal life. Bible reveals that God is love, kind, gracious, patient, longsuffering, just, and merciful. But what if I told you that if you do not accept Christ as your personal Savior that He will burn you burn **alive** in hell for ever and ever and ever and ever for billions and billions of years without mercy. Now, what kind of true picture of God would you have if I told you that? Would you be confused, because someone burning without mercy throughout eternity does not seem to be justice, longsuffering, patient, kind, and loving? Is God truly someone who will burn sinners for ever and ever without mercy? Does this type of cruel and unusual punishment match up with the character of God as described in the Bible?

We are going to get some clear answers from the Word of God. Satan is out to deceive billions of people and that He is constantly deceiving many in believing that God is a cruel judge eager to execute destruction on the wicked and eager to torture them for billions & billions of years with hell fire. Satan has created many lies on the subject of hell which has crept into many churches and popular media in order to paint the wrong image of God. How do you find out what the absolute truth is and what is error on this subject of hell? You MUST study the Word of God for yourself. It is that simple. There is no other way. So let's go to the Word of God and study it carefully to see if God will burn and torment those who chose not to serve Him throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

1. What does the Bible say about God’s character?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: 1 John 4:16; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Timothy 2:3 – 6; John 3:16;

Write Bible Answer: _____

This is one of the most important text of the Bible and it describes God has what? LOVE. Now we know that love is not some superficial or emotional feeling, but is a principle that is found in First Corinthians 13:4-8. **First Corinthians 13:4-8** describes God’s love as being long suffering, kind, patient, enduring, thinking of others, and thinking no evil. **Deuteronomy 32:4** reveals God as being perfect in character and all His judgments are right, just, and fair judge. **1 Timothy 2:3-6** tells us that God is not eager and waiting to destroy His creation. He wants ALL to be saved and come to the knowledge of truth. He is calling you even right now. He is pleading with you. In **John 3:16** He says ¹⁶For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Again, God wants to save us all and give us everlasting life.

God is not a mean God waiting to execute sinners. His main character of God is love. This love is seen in the foundation of God’s government, law, and creation. **God does not force loyalty or obedience. God desires all living beings that he created, from angels to human beings, to reflect His love and serve Him voluntarily.** God is love, perfect, just, true, and right. Let's go back to John 3:16 and focus on it for just a little bit. Again, did you notice in John 3:16 how much God loves and desires all people to be saved? We see in John 3:16 that God has made provisions for all people to have the salvation of Jesus Christ. So the rest is up to us, to believe or not to believe in the salvation of Jesus Christ. It is very simple, God promises that those who “believe” and walk in the righteousness of Jesus will not perish, but have

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everlasting life. So what can we gather from John 3:16 for those who do not believe and choose to continue a life of sin? We can simply gather from John 3:16 that God also promises that those who do not choose to grab onto God's rescue Hand will perish [meaning cease to exist], not having everlasting life. They will be eternally dead.. As we already studied, the Bible makes it clear that when a person is dead he/she can no longer breathe, talk, feel, hear, etc. Remember that according to ***First John 3:4***, sin is defined as the "transgression of the law." And ***Romans 6:23*** says that the consequences of "sin is death." We are all "doomed" to eternal death but through the salvation of Jesus Christ, God has given us a choice to eternally live or die. A person, who chooses eternal death, is not the fault of God, but the person who made the choice. As we all know, sin is very destructive and it separates from God. It is the cause of so much destruction, dead, pain, and misery. Because God loves us so much, He can not allow sin to live forever. Remember from our previous studies that God promises those who "believe" and live righteous lives through Jesus a life with no more sin, heart-ache, pain, death and eternal life. He promises a new heavens and new earth. God never fails with His promises. He must eradicate SIN forever. He must fulfill His promise to get rid of sin forever.

2. How will God eradicate or get rid of sin from this earth forever?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Psalm 145:20; Psalm 37:38; Revelation 21:8;

Write Bible Answer: _____

Revelation 21:8 clearly answers the question how God will destroy and get rid of sin. He will burn it up. You know that fire is the best purifier. In order to get rid of all infection and sin it must be burned up with fire.

3. Will sinners burn and be tormented with fire throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Malachi 4:1 – 3; 2 Peter 3:10; Isaiah 47:14

Write Bible Answer: _____

In Malachi 4:3 it says that they will "be ashes." So it is clear that God will **totally** destroy those who **choose** to cherish sin with fire and brimstone. They will be totally burned up or eradicated. The wicked will not be burning throughout eternity for billions and trillions of years. There is no statement in the Bible where it talks about "eternal torment." According to Obadiah 1:16, once the wicked are destroyed "they shall be as though they had not been." It is not Biblical, to say that those who are lost will burn throughout eternity, to say this is saying that the wicked are immortal or have eternal life. And we already studied that this is not the case in our previous lessons. According to 2 Peter 3:10, everything on earth will be burned up in the end.

4. How will Satan and his angels be destroyed?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10

Write Bible Answer: _____

Matthew 25:41 and Revelation 20:10 reveal that Satan and his evil angels, or demons, will also burn in the fire that God has prepared for them.

5. Does “everlasting fire” and “torment day and night for ever and ever” mean burning throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Jude 7; 2 Peter 2:6 [“everlasting fire”]; Matthew 3:12; Isaiah 1:28 – 31; Jeremiah 7:18 -20; Revelation 20:10 [“torment day and night for ever and ever”]; Jonah 2:6

Write Bible Answer: _____

We must let the Bible explain itself. First let's examine what is meant by “everlasting fire.” Now according to Jude 7 (verse) it says that the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed with “eternal fire.” 2 Peter 2:6. says ““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. Follow what the Bible is saying, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed with everlasting, or eternal fire as mentioned in Jude 7 and that fire according Second Peter 2:6 turned them into ashes. Is Sodom and Gomorrah and its people still burning today with “everlasting” fire. No. Why? The fire simply went out after everything was completely burned up into ashes. Matthew 3:12, Isaiah 1:31 and Jeremiah 7:20 reveals that God's “everlasting” fire is unquenchable fire, meaning no man can put the fire out while it is burning. So all the fire departments in the world would have not been able to put out the fire in Sodom and Gomorrah, it was unquenchable. It was not completely out until the last bit of Sodom and Gomorrah was burned up. The fire did its job; it forever got rid of the cities and those who lived in the cities. The same will be true when Satan, his angels, the wicked and this earth will be burned. The “everlasting fire” will not go out until everything or any traces of sin are completely burned into ashes. So “everlasting fire” has everlasting effects, but not the actual burning itself throughout eternity.

Now let's understand what is meant in Revelation 20:10 where it indicates that Satan and the wicked will be “tormented day and night for ever and ever” in the lake of fire. If you go to the original Greek meaning of the word “ever”, you will see that it has multiple meanings. In the Greek forever can mean, perpetual never ending (unlimited) or a specific time or period (meaning limited). When you understand what we learned about “everlasting” fire it is clear that in the case of Revelation 20:10, forever is talking about the specific period of time the punishment will take place which will have eternal results of never existing again. Matter of fact, the term forever is used in the Bible 56 times in connection with things that have already ended. For example, Jonah when he was in the belly of the whale at the bottom of the sea. He says in Jonah 2:6 that he was in the belly of that big fish or whale forever. But in Jonah's case, that term “forever” was a specific period of time it was only three days and three nights. We use the term forever like that also. For instance, have you ever been in a very long line at the grocery store and you where in a hurry? Have you ever said, “This line is just too long, it going to take me “**for ever**” to get out of here?” The line will most definitely slow you down if you are in a hurry, but we all know that the line is not going to last throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity, right? Does this make sense? So Revelation 20:10 is clear that the wicked and Satan will burn and it will most definitely be painful, but they will burn until all the wicked, Satan, and any traces of sin become ashes – completely burned up, never to live again. So teaching that people will burn in hell for ever throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity and be eternally tormented is not Biblical when you compare scripture with scripture.. The false teaching of eternal torment has caused many to distance themselves from God or not to believe in Him. Friend, this type of teaching was invented by Satan to misrepresent the character of God. It is slander upon a loving God who desires all to be saved.

6. Since we know that the Bible teaches that the wicked will not burn throughout eternity, how long will the wicked suffer in hell fire?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Revelation 22:12; Revelation 20:12 – 15; Luke 12:42 – 48; Matthew 11:20 – 24; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 2:1 – 9

Write Bible Answer: _____

According to Revelation 20:12 – 15 referring to the wicked, they are “judged every man according to their works.” This judgment is the executive phase in which a punishment is issued. Of course in this case it is the “lake of fire.” The Bible is clear that their judgment is based on their works. It is evident the some will burn longer than others based on their works. For example, people who commit a felony have to do prison time. They all go to prison, but some are sentenced to prison longer than others based on the type and act of the crime. Do you think God would be a just God if a person who stole a candy bar will burn throughout eternity with the person who was a mass murderer? (See **Luke 12:42 – 48 and Matthew 11:20 – 24**). The Bible does not let us know how long a person will burn, but it informs us that the wicked will be punished according to their deeds. This means that some will receive greater punishment than others especially Satan and his angels.

7. When will hellfire and brimstone of destruction and eradication of sin take place?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Matthew 13:40 – 42; Revelation 20:1 - 15

Write Bible Answer: _____

The wicked described as tares in Matthew of scripture will be cast into a “furnace of fire. So in other words, hell fire will take place at the very end of this world.

Like the days of Sodom and Gomorrah of the Old Testament, Hellfire and brimstone will be rained down by the Son of man at the very end of the sinful world. The book of Revelation gives a very accurate picture of this event. According to **Revelation 20 and 21** after God’s people who were taken to heaven after His second coming as described in First Thessalonians 4:16, 17 will live with God in the heavenly city for 1,000 years after the 1,000 years the city will descend to the earth. As the city is coming from the sky to the earth, Satan and the wicked, which are risen from the dead to receive their punishment, will attempt to capture the city. At that time as we just read in Revelation 20:9, fire will come down on them and burn them and the whole earth up. This is Hell. Hell is not some place deep down in the earth in which people are burning forever and that the devil with a pitch fork is in charge of it. That is a man made story, it is not Biblical.

8. Since we know that the wicked dead are not in a hole somewhere burning, where are the wicked [sinners] that are currently dead?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: 2 Peter 2:9, 2 Peter 3:7; Job 21:30,32; John 5:28, 29; Daniel 12:2

Write Bible Answer: _____

Base on all the scriptures the unjust [wick] dead or alive will receive their punishment at an appointed time. They do not receive their punishment as soon as they die. They are not currently burning some place in which many call “hell.” Again that is totally fictional, not Biblical.

According to John 5:28 and 29 there will be two types of resurrections. The first resurrection are those who have died in Christ and when Jesus returns a second time they will be resurrected again unto life based on First Thessalonians 4:16-18. Now according to Revelation 20, the second resurrection described in John 5:28 and 29 is when Jesus returns to earth the third time with the saved saints in the City of Heaven He will resurrect the wicked to receive their punishment. The punishment of death is known as the second death. The second death is the eternal death. This is the time in which we studied earlier in the previous question when hell fire and brimstone will rain down from heaven. Sin will be destroyed.

9. How will God feel when He has to destroy the wicked [sinners]? Is this act foreign to Him?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Ezekiel 33:11; Isaiah 28:21

Write Bible Answer: _____

God has NO PLEASURE in destroying the wicked. Imagine God turning His face anyway from the awful scene in which He has to destroy so many people that He so desperately tried to save, but they made a choice to love sin. Luke 9:56 says that God the Father sent Jesus to this earth not to destroy mankind but to save them. The destruction of the wicked is a strange act to God. Matter fact, Hell fire, total destruction of the wick is the strangest act of God.

Many make the wrong choice because they were drunk with the cares and foolishness of this world. They choose death over life. Friend, are you spiritually drunk today? Do you find yourself thinking about bills, job, family, career, etc more than God? Do you put more money into entertainment more then God’s work? Are you running with no destination in life? Friend, you are drunk with the cares of this world. God is trying to sober us up with His Word. Spiritual coffee or cute sweet saying will not do it, only the daily sincere study of God’s Word.

Jesus will be deeply saddened when He must rain down fire from Heaven to destroy all the sinners that He died to save. They simply did not believe in the salvation of Jesus Christ. For years He wooed each one of them, by saying, “come unto Me, I am the way the truth and the life”, but they refused. God does not want to see one person lost, but Satan and sin can not abide forever. Sin must be destroyed to fulfill all God’s promises spoken of in the Bible.

10. After the earth is eradicated from sin by fire, what promises are in store for earth and God's people?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:3, 4

Write Bible Answer: _____

Oh what promises! Can you image this!