

What About Everlasting Fire?

The Bible does speak of “eternal fire” in Jude 7, but this is fire that has *eternal consequences*. It does not burn for eternity. In fact in the context it speaks of Sodom and Gomorrah as “examples” of this “eternal fire”. We might rightly ask the question: Is Sodom or Gomorrah burning right now? The answer obviously is _____. See also 2Peter 2:6.

Eternal Punishment

The Bible also speaks of “eternal punishment” in Matthew 25:46. This simply means punishment that has *eternal consequences*. Notice that the phrase is “eternal punishment”, not “eternal punishing”. The difference is enormous. The only reason that someone would insist that this phrase means eternal conscious torment is if they already believed the non-biblical teaching that man is naturally _____. This teaching, however, as we have seen, is not Biblical.

How Long is Forever?

This might seem like an usual question. The Bible does use the word “forever” in the context of the final punishment. (See, for example, Revelation 14:11) But several things must be considered before arriving at an unwarranted conclusion.

1. The word “forever” means *as long as a thing shall last*.
2. “Forever” in the NT can be translated “an age” or “until the end of the age”.
3. The word “forever” is used in the Bible to refer to things that lasted for a finite period of time. See Exodus 21:6; 1Samuel 1:22, 28; Jonah 1:17; 2:6
4. The word “forever” has to be interpreted and translated in a way that is consistent with the original languages and is also consistent with *everything* the Bible has to say about the subject of hell.

Jesus Endured Hell

Jesus said, as he stumbled into the Garden of Gethsemane, that his “soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death” Matthew 26:38. Compare this with Matthew 10:28. Clearly, when the soul dies you are experiencing “hell”. Jesus endured this horrific experience—the second death—for you on the cross! *Jesus would rather go to hell for you than live in heaven without you*. This is the great good news of hell. What a wonderful Savior! Praise Him!

—Discover Prophecy—

with David Asscherick, DP Speaker

No. 18

Discover: The Good News About Hell

The word Gospel means ‘good news’ or ‘good tidings’. The whole Bible is filled with good news, with Gospel. Even the subject of hell, rightly understood, is good news. There have been, down through the ages, significant misunderstandings about the subject of hell. In this lesson we will seek to cut through those misunderstandings and pre-programmed pictures in order to arrive at Bible truth. If we let the Bible speak we will surely succeed.

The Millennium

The clear teaching of Scripture is that there are _____ resurrections. Jesus Himself affirmed and taught this in John 5:28, 29. See also: Acts 24:15; Daniel 12:1, 2; Hebrews 11:33-35; Revelation 20:5, 6.

Five Events that Begin the Millennium

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

The Earth, a Desolate Wilderness

The Bible describes the earth as being “a bottomless pit”. This phrase comes from the Greek word *abusos*. What English word does that sound like? _____ Not coincidentally, the word *abusos* is used to translate the condition of the earth in Genesis chapter 1 in the Septuagint translation (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament). Consider the following passages:

- Revelation 6:15-17; Isaiah 24:19-22; Jeremiah 4:23-27, 33

The earth is desolate following the 2nd Coming. Satan and the fallen angels are left alone for 1,000 years to contemplate the woeful result of their rebellious experiment! The righteous are in heaven. But what are they doing there?

Five Events that Close the Millennium

Five events close the millennium, list them and give textual support.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Inside or Outside?

At the close of the millennium, following the resurrection of the wicked, *everyone who has ever lived* will be alive all at the same time. What a sight that will be! All of the righteous will be inside of the city, the New Jerusalem; all of the wicked will be outside of the New Jerusalem. The Bible says that the walls of the New Jerusalem are *clear*. See Revelation 21:18. The righteous and the wicked will be able to see one another. The wicked make an effort to overtake the city by force. It is at this time that the fires of the vengeance and judgment of God descend upon them and “devour” them.

Hell Happens at a Certain Time For a Certain Purpose

The word “hell” occurs ____ times in the Bible (KJV). ____ times it occurs in the OT where it is translated from the Hebrew word _____. This word means *grave* or *place of the departed*. In the NT the word “hell” is translated from the Greek words _____ and _____. The word _____ means *a place of burning or destruction*. The word _____ simply means *grave*, like the OT word _____.

When, Where, How Long?

In answering these three questions from the Bible we will arrive at a correct, and perhaps shockingly new, picture of what hell is.

1. When is hell? _____
2. Where is hell? _____

The Question of How Long is the An Easily Answered Question

As we have already learned human beings are not _____ immortal. Immortality is a _____ from God that comes as a result of accepting Jesus Christ as one’s personal _____. See, for example, 1John 3:15; John 3:16; Romans 2:7; 6:23; 1Timothy 6:16; Ezekiel 18:4, 20. It is absolutely critical to understand this simple point: *if man is not immortal then there is no need for hell to burn throughout the ceaseless eternal ages*. To put it another way: *the foundational reason that hell has been assumed to be eternal is that man has been assumed to be immortal, and thus indestructible*. It is essential that this be understood. If man is not immortal, then there is no need to insist that hell be eternal.

Remember that it is the Greeks, Babylonians, Egyptians and others who believed this idea of the immortality of the human soul. It is not a Biblical concept. It is called anthropological dualism.

According to the Bible, the fate of the wicked is as follows:

- They will die. Romans 6:23; Matthew 10:28
- They will perish. Luke 13:3; John 3:16
- They will be burnt up. Malachi 4:1
- They will be devoured by the flames. Revelation 20:9
- They will be utterly consumed. Psalm 37:20; Isaiah 47:14
- They will be turned to ashes. Malachi 4:3
- They die the second death. Revelation 20:6, 14; 21:8; Matt. 15:4
- They will suffer destruction. 2Thessalonians 1:9; Philippians 3:19
- They will be as though they had not been. Obadiah 16
- Satan will be totally destroyed. Ezekiel 28:17, 18; Hebrews 2:14