

January 28, 2023

Again, we must always allow scripture to explain scripture (*1 Cor 2:13*) since the “wisdom of this world is foolishness with God” (*1 Cor 3:19*).

Hellfire: Would God Really Do *That?*: Lesson 12

1. What is God really like?

Very true, God is the true meaning and epitome of love.

2. What is God’s desire for the entire human family?

In 2 Per 3:9, “repentance” (*Gk.3341*) is “*compunction* (for guilt, including *reformation*); by implication *reversal* (of [another’s] decision)”. This along with the word “believeth” (*Gk.4100*) “by implication to *entrust* (especially one’s spiritual wellbeing to Christ)” are necessary since “belief” in this context serves as a synecdoche (*part of the whole*) that includes all the steps leading to salvation (*hear, believe, repent, confess and be baptized*).

3. Is there really a hell?

Hell- *Gk.1067*- place (or state) of everlasting punishment. This “everlasting punishment” correlates with Jesus’ statement in *Jn 3:16* concerning those who would receive “everlasting life”. More on this in the following explanations.

4. When is hell going to burn?

Jesus said that Satan “was a murderer from the beginning” (*Jn 8:44*) and in *Mat 25:41* He stated where Hell was “prepared for the devil and his angels”. Even though this is speaking of the end of the Messianic Age on earth, it is a stretch to say *Mat 13:40-42* is stating that “hellfire will not start burning until the ‘end of the age’”. Jesus stated no such thing here and the writer gives no proof or explanation for this supposition.

5. When will sinners go to hell?

The writer fails again to give proof to back his assumption here that there will be “*two* resurrections”. *John 5:28-29* speaks of an event that will happen **simultaneously** when “**all** that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and **come forth**; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; **and** they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation”. (*emp, added*) Both groups will be raised at the same moment but will end up going their separate ways. Jesus gave **no** indication of a space of time between when “**all**” the dead will be raised. And Christ will only return once more (*emp, added- Jn 14:3, 1 Cor 15:24; Heb 12:26-27*).

We dealt with the (*figurative*) 1,000 year (*literal*) reign in the last pamphlet. Again, that reign is presently underway since it began at Pentecost (*33 AD- Acts 2*) and will last until when Jesus returns for His bride the church (*i.e., kingdom- Mk 1:15*). The same goes for Satan’s binding which runs concurrent to the reign of the saints. The wicked dead are where the rich man of *Lk 16* is in the Hadean realm in torments awaiting the resurrection

only to be cast at that time into “the lake of fire and brimstone... and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (*Rev 20:10*). Jesus said in Mat 5:5 that the meek would “inherit the earth”. The meek **did** inherit the earth as per the Great Commission which made Christians stewards of the earth (*Gk.1093- Thayer: “the inhabited earth”*) via the message of the Gospel.

6. Where is hell?

As was discussed in the last pamphlet, *Rev 20:9* is not speaking of “all the lost from all ages” as being “Gog and Magog” which will consist of the antichristian institutions (*religious, political, denominational, national*) at the time of the end. Also, *2 Pet 3:7* states nowhere that Hell, a spiritual place where the damned will spend eternity (*Rev 20:10*), will occupy the earth; just as Heaven is a place that will be occupied by the redeemed for eternity (*1 Thes 4:17*). True, there will be a fire that “consumes the entire planet” but not to cleanse it for some future city (*which already occupies the earth; the church- Rev 21:10*) to inhabit it since there will be nothing left (*physical*) here according to *2 Pet 3:10*. The “hellfire” the writer speaks of here will not be a one and done event.

7. What happens to lost people who go to hell?

The claim that “The Bible does not teach that people will suffer in hell throughout eternity” is false! Jesus said in Mat 25:46 that the wicked “shall go away into everlasting (*Gk.166*) punishment; but the righteous into life eternal (*Gk.166*)”. This passage cannot be debated! If the righteous are to be eternally with Christ in Heaven and the same Greek word for “everlasting” is used to describe the same duration of time that the wicked will spend in punishment, how can this passage be twisted to mean otherwise? Making a point to use the same word for the future duration of time in both cases, Jesus **plainly** taught in this ‘associated term’ that Hell is as unending into the future in duration as will be the unending future in Heaven.

Yes, *Eze 18:4* does state that “the soul that sins shall die”, but we need to understand that death is not annihilation but only separation for all eternity according to *2 Thes 1:9*. Unrepentant sinners cannot be in fellowship with God since God Himself stated that “there shall no man see Me, and live” (*Ex 33:20*). “God Himself shall be with” only those who have entered the “Holy City” (*a.k.a., the glorified church in Heaven- Rev 21:3*).

Also, stating that “[hellfire] is the second death” (*Rev 20:14*) is again taking a passage out of context to promote the doctrine of annihilation which the Bible does not sanction. If a sinner is enjoying his lifetime of sin with the prospect of being completely annihilated in the end and not spending an eternity in punishment, why wouldn’t he continue in his worldly pleasures if knowing his suffering will only be comparatively momentary?

Joh 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish (*Gk.622- Thayer- “to incur the loss of true or eternal life; to be delivered up to eternal misery” [emp. added]*), but have everlasting (*Gk.166*) life.

8. What, ultimately, is the condition of people who are burned in hell?

Both Malachi 4 and Matthew 24 are speaking of the same event; the year Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD. Both using metaphorical language they describe the terror that went on inside the walls of Jerusalem even before the walls were breached. Jesus stated that “then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (*Mat 24:21*). Starvation was so bad within the city that women were eating their own children. The dead were dying faster than they could be buried, thus the bodies at one point were thrown over the walls. (*Josephus, Wars of the Jews*) If those bodies having been “sown in corruption” are to be “raised in incorruption” (*1 Cor 15:42*), and Paul makes no distinction between the good and evil, then both the righteous and wicked as spiritual bodies will continue through eternity in their separate states. Just as “eternal life is a gift given to those who have faith in Christ” then, as Jesus Himself stated in *Mat 25:46*, the wicked will suffer punishment for the same duration of time.

In *1 Jn 5:12* just stating that “he who does not have the Son of God does not have life” isn’t stating he is just annihilated. That is again reading into the text. Obviously the opposite of life is death but as was stated earlier, death is a separation, whether physical death being separation of the spirit from the body or spiritual death, where the soul is separated from God. (*2 Thes 1:9*) The syllogism “The lost do not have the Son, and therefore cannot live forever-even in hell” is thus incorrect. As Jesus stated in *Mk 3:29*, “damnation (*Gk.2920- justice*)” is “eternal (*Gk.166- perpetual: - everlasting*)”.

9. What effect does hell have on the devil?

Eze 28:18- Just as *Isa 14:12-14* doesn’t concern Satan neither does this passage. *Isa 14:4* is a taunt against the king of Babylon. Here in this context (*Eze 28:12*) it is a lament over the king of Tyre. To assume that this is speaking about Satan’s end is again reading into the passage. Also in context, *Nahum 1:9* isn’t speaking of a supposed rising up from the ashes once the earth is cleansed with hellfire since that prophecy has also been taken out of its original context by the writer here. Pulling passages out of their context to prove a man-made doctrine gives the distinct impression that the writer hasn’t done due diligence in his Bible homework. That passage (*Nahum 1:9*) concerns Nineveh and any true Bible student will see that in its true context. Therefore the explanation the writer gives for these passages becomes null and void because he gives no explanation for his assumption backed up with scripture.

Sin might be “gone forever” but sinners who are “not found written in the book of life [will be] cast into the lake of fire” (*Rev 20:15*). As Paradise and torments in the Hadean realm have “a great gulf fixed” (*Lk 16:26*) so does Heaven and Hell which are both eternal but separate realms. Satan will not “be blotted out of existence in the fires of hell” since he is said to “be tormented day and night forever and ever” (*Rev 20:10*). Using the same passage in *2 Pet 3* with the statement of the flood to prove the earth will be cleansed by fire instead of water just substantiates the fact that “the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up (*Gk.2618- consume wholly*)” (*v. 10*). At that point nothing physical will remain and will go back to the way it was **before** God created it “**by** the same word” (*v. 7- emp, added*).

10. But doesn’t the bible say the wicked will burn forever?

Here again the writer has given no true scriptural evidence to his assumption that “the Bible teaches that Satan will be reduced to ashes in the fires of hell” so he can’t “burn forever and ever at the same time”. To say the Bible teaches something it does not is claiming a contradiction to what has been inspired. Book, chapter and verse please!

It has been stated that “if God ‘lives forever and ever (*Gk.165*)’ [*Rev 1:18; 10:6; 15:7*], and glory is to be given to Him ‘for ever and ever’ [*Rev 1:6; 4:9-10; 5:13; 7:12*], and if the saved ‘shall reign for ever and ever’ with the Lord in Heaven [*Rev 22:5*], then the wicked assuredly ‘will be tormented day and night for ever and ever’ [*Rev 20:10; 14:11*]. ‘Forever and ever’ is ‘the formula of eternity’ (Vincent, 1889, 2:148)”

So if the Revelation (*14:11*) states that “the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever”, smoke being evidence of fire, to try and twist these passages listed above is attempting scriptural gymnastics just to make the inspired text fit one’s own man-made doctrines.

11. What does “forever” mean when it refers to hellfire?

Using 1 Sam 1:22 and 28 to try and prove the length of the eternal existence in Hell that the unrepentant sinner will endure is again, taking scripture out of context to misrepresent the longevity of the destination of sinners. The associated term of “forever” in verse 22 is qualified in verse 28 with the phrase “as long as he liveth”. Another example of this is found in Lev 7:34. The offering mentioned here was taken from “the children of Israel from off the sacrifice of their peace offerings, and [] given them unto Aaron the priest and unto his sons by a **statute forever** (*Heb.5769- time out of mind*) from among the children of Israel” (*emp, added*). The associated term for length of time is “among the children of Israel”. Israel was under the Mosaic Law and once that Law was fulfilled in Christ (*Mat 5:17*) with the New Testament priesthood that “statute” came to an end thus “an event that has long expired”. As seen below, Hebrew and Greek words have several ‘glosses’ since one word in each of these languages has different meanings (*glosses*) depending on context and usage.

Eternal-

Gk.166- Thayer: (1) “*without beginning or end, that which always has been and always will be*”; (2) “*without beginning*”; and (3) “*without end, never to cease, everlasting*”. As in Rom 16:26; 1 Tim 6:16; Heb 9:14; Jn 10:28; Rom 5:21; 6:23; 1 Jn 1:2; 2 the 1:9; Jude 7.

Heb.5769- properly *concealed*, that is, the *vanishing* point; generally *time out of mind* (past or future), that is, (practically) *eternity*. As in Gen 21:33; Lev 7:34; 1 Sam 1:22, 28; Ps 90:2; Mic 5:2; Ecc 12:5; Ps 102:11-12, 27; **Dan 12:2**

The “associated term” defines usage; depending on context, whether immediate or remote. Depending on the different glosses substituted according to context with the surrounding thought, one word could be used differently but not always contextually.

Example: “Judge (*Gk.2919- condemn*) not, that ye be not judged (*Gk.2919*).” Yet in Jn 7:24 Jesus also said “Judge (*Gk.2919- condemn*) not according to appearance, but judge (*Gk.2919- distinguish*) righteous judgment”; same word different gloss to fit context. Eternal, as shone

above, is a word that can either mean a duration to a point unable to be seen or to a distance without end, depending on the context or associated term (*as in Mat 25:46*). In Jonah 2:6 Jonah was using hyperbole to explain how he felt his length of time in the great fish seemed but in 1:17 is the “associated term” of “three days and three nights”. We often use hyperboles either when waiting on a usually late person stating “They are never going to get here”, or when going on a seemingly endless trip and how often our children have said “We’re never going to get there!” Such was the case with Jonah. Correlating the length of “hellfire” to these O.T. examples is like saying “because I like chocolate I also like broccoli”. The one has nothing to do with the other. Instead of using the gloss that best fits the context of the passage, the English translators did us no favors in translating several glosses into one word. Without a basic understanding of the Hebrew or Greek, Bible study becomes confusing and open to anyone’s interpretation. That’s why I suggest the student purchase a Thayer’s Greek Lexicon and a Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance (*unless you prefer a more convenient electronic form such as eSword*).

12. What event does the Bible use as being an example of what hell will be like?

To use Jude 7 and 2 Pet 2:6 to describe the length of time that Hell will exist is again taking passages out of context to make a vain point. Using the example of what happened to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah was and is for the hearer to understand as example a “type” of pain and suffering and not its duration. Jesus often used object lessons in His parables to make moral points (*the farmers knew what wheat and tares were; fisherman understood what it meant to be “fishers of men”, etc.*). Jude used Sodom and Gomorrah as an “example (*Gk.1164- specimen*)” of what “suffering the vengeance of eternal (*Gk.166*) fire” would be **like**. He did not state in verse 7 that only its “effects” would be everlasting (*which again is reading into it without any proof*) but that the fire would be perpetual. The English translators used the word “ensample (*Gk.5262- an exhibit for imitation or warning*)” in 2 Pet 2:6 as to the **type** of punishment and **not its duration**. Lamentations 4:6 states that these two cities were “overthrown in a moment” thus they “are not still burning today” as though that comment proves anything.

13. For whom was hell designed?

When explaining the meaning of Mat 25:41, one must also take into consideration verse 46. As has been plainly stated above in point #7, Jesus taught clearly to those who understood that if “the righteous” go to “life eternal (*Gk.166*)” and the wicked “into everlasting (*Gk.166*) punishment” where the same Greek word being used in the same sentence is employed, then as the one in duration so the other. The “everlasting fire” of verse 41 does not invoke annihilation but perpetuity. Why have a fire that is inextinguishable if it is to only last as long as it would take to purge the earth of sinful people? No gloss in the Greek will substantiate that. It is amazing to me that the writer insists that it does. He is obviously not a student of the koine Greek.

14. Why does the Bible mention “unquenchable fire” if the fires of hell will eventually burn out?

The “fire” of Luke 3:17 is said to be “unquenchable (*Gk.762- asbestos- not extinguished, perpetual*). Nothing in this Greek word states that it will eventually burn out. Perpetual means perpetual. Using as many O.T. passages as the writer wishes to use to make it state otherwise is futile. Using Jer 17:27 to describe hellfire’s longevity is once again taking a scripture at random to justify, in vain, what the writer is attempting to use as fact. Jer 17 is prophetic against Jerusalem for profaning the Sabbath and 2 Chr 36:19-21 has to do with the state of Jerusalem before the Jews were permitted to rebuild under Cyrus the king of Persia. Neither of these passages justifies the claim that hellfire will serve its purpose and then go out.

15. What about the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31?

The story of the rich man and Lazarus is **not** a parable! Parables were used as object lessons but only in Luke 16 does Jesus use names (*Lazarus, Abraham*). He definitely **did** use this event to show what happens in the afterlife; to the Sadducees who didn’t believe in the resurrection or even angels (*Mat 22:23-30*) and to the elite Pharisees who, as Jews, felt they were above taking care of Lazarus (*a child of Abraham*) as they should have (*Lev 25:35; Deu 15:7-11*). The reason the writer has to make this a parable must have to do with his unsubstantiated doctrine of soul sleep and how, as seen in “The Mystery of Death” pamphlet, the soul and body remain intact until the body is “wakened” by Jesus in a supposed “first resurrection”.

16. What will God do after hellfire has burned?

Rev 21:1 is not a discussion on what the earth will be like once the fires of Hell have “cleansed” its surface and then gone out.

2Co 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal (*Gk.166- perpetual*) weight of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal (*Gk.4340- endure for a time*); but the things which are not seen (*spiritual*) *are* eternal (*Gk.166*).

They say if a lie is repeated often enough and with seeming authority it eventually becomes truth. We see such in the political arena. But such should never be the case where it concerns Bible study. Whoever the writer or writers are of these pamphlets they seem to rehash certain passages over and over as if attempting to convince others (*and maybe even themselves*) that what they are promoting is truth. I have always felt that if something doesn’t seem right it probably isn’t.

In Him,
Charli