
WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT HELL?



Is Hell Real or Figurative? - Who Is Right?

The title of this material asks the question, "*What does the Bible say about Hell?*" The fact is, we will see that the Bible says a lot about the subject of Hell. But is Hell real, or is it figurative? Some teach one thing and some teach another, and they both use the Bible to prove their position. Can we know who is right?

Figurative? - Symbolic? - Literal?

There are three types of languages in the Bible—*figurative*, *symbolic*, and *literal*. An example of figurative language is when Jesus said, "*Let the dead bury their dead.*" He also said, "*Harden not your hearts.*" That too would be figurative. And then there's symbolic language like we have in Daniel with the beasts that symbolizes something. In the Book of Revelation it says, "*I saw a star fall from heaven...*" We would conclude that was a literal star if it wasn't for the next verse, which says, "*and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.*" We can always tell within the context of what we are studying whether we're dealing with *literal* language or whether we're dealing with *symbolic* or *figurative* language. Someone has said that if the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense, lest it become nonsense. Most of the Bible is literal and should be read that way.

A question that deserves an answer is, "Why would God create people knowing that multitudes of them would burn in Hell for eternity?" If we want to arrive at the truth of these questions, we must approach this subject honestly, getting past what we really want to believe. We can know the truth, but only if we're willing to accept the truth. We must decide if we are willing to accept the truth, rather than holding onto information that confirms what or who we already believe.

We must also decide if we believe the Bible to be the Word of God. The first ten words in the Bible are these: "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*" If we can believe the first ten words of the Bible, then we can believe it all. As a matter of fact, if we believe the first ten words of the Bible, we have no choice but to believe it all. What does the Bible say about Hell? We're going to look at that subject in depth. The word Hell occurs fifty-four times in the Scriptures. We will look at these verses in an attempt to determine what the Bible really says about this subject.

Does the Bible tell us why God created Hell? Yes, it does. Matthew Chapter 24:41, tells us that Hell was "*...prepared for the devil and his angels.*" Jesus said it is an everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. That word "*angels*" has been translated "*messengers*" seven times. Those who promote what the devil wants are his followers. Those who promote what the Lord wants are His followers, and we all choose.

Two Decisions - Two Groups - Two Destinies

We read in **Matthew 24:30**, "...they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." At that time, the world is going to be divided into two groups, and there are going to be two destinies as a result of their decisions.

Those who are heading for Heaven, Matthew Chapter 25:4, says, "*Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*"

Those who are heading for Hell. Matthew Chapter 25:41, says, "*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 verse forty-six says, "*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*" We want to believe that "*everlasting punishment*" is symbolic, but we do not want to think that "*life eternal*" is symbolic, but we can't have it both ways.

Choices determine destinies. Jesus said, "*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*" Proverbs 1:29 refers to those that "*hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord.*" Everybody on earth has no choice but to choose. Deuteronomy 30:19 says, "*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.*" Therefore choose. We have no choice but to choose. Joshua said in Joshua 24:15, "*If it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*"

Why did God create people knowing that many would end up in Hell? That is an important question. First of all, there are some things we don't get to know. Deuteronomy 29:29, says, "*The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*" We have those things which are revealed unto us and we have the secret things which belong unto the Lord. We have our hands full with doing the things that are revealed unto us without worrying about how to figure out what God says and does about the things that are His secrets. "*The secret things belong unto the Lord.*"

“He Hath Done Whatsoever He Hath Pleasèd.”

Psalm 115:3, says, "*But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*" God does what He wants to do. It says in Psalm 135:6-8, "*Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.⁷ He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.⁸ Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast.*" Get it in your head. God does what He pleases in heaven and earth, in the sea, in the lightning, in the wind, and when He wanted to put to death the firstborn of all those in Egypt, He did it because it pleased Him to do it, and it's none of our business as to why He does things the way He does things. "*The secret things belong unto the Lord. He hath done what He pleased.*"

“It Pleased The LORD To Bruise Him.”

We read in Isaiah 53:10, “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him.” It pleased the Lord to crucify Christ. I don't understand that. I don't have to understand that. It pleased the Lord that the plan of salvation would work this way, and if you're saved, you want to be thanking God that it did please the Lord that Christ would go to Calvary so that you could know what it means to have eternal life.

Psalm 107:25, says, “For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.” Back in December the 26th, 2004, on a Sunday we had the tsunami that came in, and 150,000 people lost their lives, and we say, “Mother Nature did that.” NO! it was God who did that, “*For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.*” He does what He pleases, and you and I need to get that into our heads.

Ecclesiastes 3:14 says, “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.” Ecclesiastes 8:12 says, “...I know that it shall be well with them that fear God...” That's what we need to choose. We're living in a day when there's no fear of God before our eyes. The Lord said in Psalm 50:10-12, “*For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. ¹¹I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. ¹²If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.*” We need to get it in our heads who we're dealing with when we're dealing with Almighty God, and it's time we got back to hearing sermons like “*Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.*”

The Most Important Question: *Do you believe the Bible is the Word of God?* Yes or no? We all must answer that question. And if you don't believe it, why don't you believe it? Romans 3:3-4 says, “*For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? ⁴God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar...*” Jesus said in Matthew 9:29, “*According to your faith*” — according to what you believe — “*be it unto you.*”

God Sends Nobody to Hell

It's your choice. Back in the days of Noah, for 120 years Noah preached and built the ark. Everybody had a choice. Most chose to laugh and ridicule and make fun of Noah and what he was saying, much like most of the world does today concerning the things of God. You have a choice, but if you're going to go to Hell, you're going to have to wade through the blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary to get there. The people in Noah's day simply refused to listen to God.

The Bible says in Hebrews Chapter 9:27, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” On the average, every sixty seconds 105 people in this world keep that appointment. “*It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this, the judgment.*” Those who say that the grave ends it all, what kind of nonsense is that? They died. Let's bring them up for judgment, and then put them back in the grave? That's just stupid.

Who should I believe concerning the subject of Hell? Those who promote Hell as being real and those who say that it is figurative use the same Bible to prove their position. How can we know the truth about the subject? First of all, John Chapter 8:32, says, “*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*” John 16:13 says, “*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.*” How does that happen? Are we just going to pray a prayer and say, “*Lord, give me all truth,*” and we're going to get a warm and fuzzy feeling, and all of a sudden we're going to have all knowledge?

No, it's not going to work that way. We read in Second Timothy 2:15, “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*” Notice it says “*study*”; it says “*workman*”; and then it says “*truth.*” If you're too lazy to get into the Word of God to get the truth, then you're not going to get it. It's just that simple.

We read in Psalm 33:4, “*For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.*” If you want the truth about how to operate a computer program, you're going to have to get some books and find out how to get the job done. If you want the truth about how to fix your washing machine, you're going to have to get a book on washing machines and figure out how it's done. If you want the truth about the subject of Heaven and Hell and all the other subjects in the Bible, you have to “*study to show thyself approved, “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,”* and when we're willing to do that, the Bible says—and Jesus said it—that “*the Spirit of truth will guide you into all truth.*”

“The Children of God” - “The Children of The Devil”

First John 3:10, refers to, “*...the children of God...and the children of the devil.*” When Christ comes back He will divide those two groups, and there would be two destinies. To the group that decided to follow God, it says in Matthew 25:34 that the Lord will say “*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*” For those who decided to follow the way of the devil, it says that the Lord will say, “*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*”—or and his messengers. It's one or the other, and we simply choose.

The word “*children*” here is used figuratively, and is expressing a person's relationship. What is your relationship toward God? What is your relationship toward the devil? “*Relationship*” is the way in which two or more people regard and behave toward each other, and our relationships are a result of our choices. We choose to marry the person we marry. We choose to have the friends we have. We choose whether we want to be the children of God or the children of the devil, and to become the children of God, the Bible says we simply need to repent of our sin, ask God to forgive us, and we become what the Bible calls a child of God. The Lord looked at the religious hypocrites who were going to church all the time but they didn't repent of their sins. Joshua said in Chapter 14:15, “*And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve.*” Hebrews 9:27 says also, “*... it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*”

The word “*Hell*” is in the Bible 54 times. It is found in Deuteronomy once, Second Samuel once, the Book of Job twice. It is in Psalms seven times, the Proverbs seven times. It is in Isaiah six times, Ezekiel four, the Book of Amos once, the Book of Jonah once, Habakkuk once. In Matthew it's there nine times; in Mark three times, in Luke three times, in Acts twice, in James once, Second Peter once, and in the Book of Revelation four times.

The Old Testament is written in Hebrew. The New Testament is written in Greek. The word “*Hell*” in the Old Testament, it is a translation from the word “*Sheol.*” It is found in the Hebrew 65 times. In our King James Bible it has been translated “*grave*” 31 times, it has been translated “*Hell*” 31 times, and it has been translated “*pit*” three times. Then in the Old Testament we have the word *queber*, q u e b e r. That word is in the Old Testament Hebrew 64 times. It has been translated “*grave*” 35 times, “*sepulcher*” 26, “*burying place*” four times. It is used in the plural sense 29 times. It is located on the earth 32 times; it is referred to as being dug, like a grave, six times, touched five times, and somebody has given ownership to a tomb or sepulcher seven times.

In the New Testament, the Greek words are Hades, Gehenna, and Tartarus. The Greek word “*Hades*” has been translated “*Hell*” ten times; it has been translated “*grave*” once, and it has been translated “*pit*” three times. The Greek word “*Gehenna*” has been translated “*Hell*” twelve times, and the Greek word “*Tartarus*” has been translated “*Hell*” once. In order to understand what the Bible says about the subject of Hell, we need to make sure that we're looking at the words in the original Hebrew or in the original Greek to see what the word actually was, and then we can determine the context. For example, those who teach that Hell means the grave, we see that, in the Old Testament the body never goes to a Sheol but it goes to a queber 37 times. Sheol is never mentioned as being on the earth, but a queber is mentioned in the Old Testament as being on the earth 32 times. Man is never put into a Sheol, but he's put into a queber 33 times. Man never makes a Sheol, but he makes a queber or a grave six times, and man never touches a Sheol, but he touches a queber six times.

In the New Testament, the word Sheol of the Old Testament is the same as Hades in the New Testament. As we mentioned before, Hell is mentioned 24 times in the New Testament. Twenty-two of those 24 times it is mentioned by Jesus Himself. James mentions Hell once and Peter mentions Hell once. As we said, there are three Greek words for Hell—*Hades*, *Gehenna*, and *Tartarus*. By way of example, Hades is like we would look at our local jail when someone is arrested and they are held there until a trial. If a man is arrested for assaulting somebody or if he is arrested for murder, he is kept in the local jail until his trial. When he comes before the judge, and is found guilty he will be sent to the penitentiary. The simple way of understanding Hades is a place where people are kept until the trial, the Great White Throne Judgment. Gehenna is an example of a penitentiary where after the trial, they are sent to Gehenna, which is the Lake of Fire.

The other word is Tartarus, and that word is found in Second Peter 2:4, where we read, “...God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell”—that word is Tartarus—*“and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.”*

In Acts Chapter 2:31, referring to the Lord, we read that His soul was not left in Hell. Then in Ephesians Chapter 4:8-10, it mentions the Lord descending into the lower part of the earth. In Luke 23:43, when He was on the cross, Jesus said to the thief who received Him as his Savior, *“Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”* This takes a little bit of explanation.

In Luke Chapter 16:22-28, there's a very familiar story:

“And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.”

This story is a literal story. God never named people in a parable. We have two people here. We have the rich man and we have the beggar whose name is Lazarus. God also mentions Abraham. The rich man

represents those who are unsaved, and the beggar represents those who are saved. We have two sections in what is translated here in this portion of Scripture as Hell. The word is Hades, and the Bible talks about one section of Hades where there is “*torment*” and another section of Hades where Lazarus was “*comforted*”, and between the two sections, the Bible says “*there is a great gulf fixed.*”

We have two people, representing the saved and the unsaved, two sections in what is translated here as Hell, which is the Greek word Hades, two results, one is in torment (mentioned four times here) and the other one is comforted. When somebody dies, whether it’s all the way from Adam right up until today, the Bible says that whether they're saved or they're unsaved, their body goes to the grave, but the soul lives on forever. The soul of the unsaved who depart from this world go into that torment section of Hades. There is a great gulf fixed, and on the other side, those who are saved prior to Calvary went into the Paradise section of what is translated Hades here with a great gulf fixed between the two.

Then we have the verses in Ephesians 4:8-10:

“Wherefore he saith, When he”—referring to Jesus—“ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)”

In Acts chapter 2:31, referring to the Lord, Peter said that His soul was not left in Hell, quoting from the psalms. When referring to Hell, it's referring to Hades. What has happened here is Christ died on the cross; the Bible says He descended into the lower parts of the earth into where the Paradise section of Hades is. We are told that He set captivity free; that is, He took them with Him to Heaven, and now, it says in Second Corinthians 5:8, *“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”*

No one could go to Heaven until Jesus had paid the price for sin. Prior to that they went to the saved section of Hades, which is referred to as Paradise. Jesus said to the thief on the cross, *“To day shalt thou be with me in paradise,”* and then He set all of those free to go to Heaven who had been in that section, and now when we die, it's *“absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”* Of course, bodies are all in the grave, but the lost souls are still in that section of Hades where it talks about a place of torment.

They will be resurrected from Hades at the Great White Throne Judgment, and the Bible says in Revelation 20:11, *“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God...”*

References in the New Testament that use the word "Hell."

These words came from Jesus.

- **Matthew 5:22**, *“...in danger of hell fire.”*
 - **Matthew 5:29**, *“...cast into hell.”*
 - **Matthew 5:30**, *“...cast into hell.”*
 - **Matthew 10:28**, *“...both soul and body in hell.”*
 - **Matthew 11:23**, *“...shalt be brought down to hell.”*
 - **Matthew 16:18**, *“...the gates of hell.”*
 - **Matthew 18:9**, *“...cast into hell fire.”*
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- **Matthew 23:15**, "...ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."
- **Matthew 23:33**, "...how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"
- **Mark 9:43**, "into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched";
- **Mark 9:44**, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched";
- **Mark 45**, they're "...cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched";
- **Mark 46**, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched";
- **Mark 9:47**, "...cast into hell fire";
- **Mark 48**, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. "
- **Luke 10:15**, "...shalt be thrust down to hell";
- **Luke 12:5**, "Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell";
- **Luke 16:23**, "...in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments."

Peter in Acts Chapter two quoting from the psalms said, "...thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," referring to what we just talked about where Christ went into the section of Hades where the Christians were. And then in Acts 2:31 he "spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." James mentioned Hell in James Chapter 3, verse 6. He said, "...it is set on fire of hell." Now, you can take all of those references that we've talked about and try to apply that to being a grave, and you have to be somewhere beyond stupid.

These words came from Jesus.

- **Revelation 1:18**, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."
- **Revelation 6:8**, "Death, and Hell followed."
- **Revelation 20:13**, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."
- **Revelation 20:14**, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

Some references that talk about Hell without using the word Hell.

- **Matthew 3:12**, "...the tares are gathered and burned in the fire."
- **Matthew 13:40**, "...a furnace of fire."
- **Matthew 13:42**, "...a furnace of fire."
- **Matthew 13:50**, "...into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."
- **Matthew 25:41**, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."
- **Matthew 25:46**, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."

You just can't get a grave out of that.

We read in Mark 16:6, that Jesus said, "...he that believeth not shall be damned"; **Mark 9:44**, "the fire is not quenched"; **Mark 9:46**, "the fire is not quenched," and **Mark 9:48**, "the fire is not quenched." In the Book of John Jesus said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." We like that everlasting life part but we don't want to talk about everlasting punishment.

- **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, 29 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."
- **Acts 17:31**, "...he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world."

- **Romans 2:5**, “...treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath.”
- **Second Thessalonians 1:7-8**, “...the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God.”
- **Hebrews 6:2**, “...resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment.”
- **Hebrews 9:27**, “...it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”
- **Hebrews 10:26**, “...if we sin willfully, there is a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.”
- **Hebrews 10:30**, “Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord.”
- **Hebrews 10:31**, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”
- **Second 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.”
- **Revelation 14:11**, “And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night.”
- **Revelation 19:20**, “...fire burning with brimstone;”
- **Revelation 20:10**, “...lake of fire and brimstone where they shall be tormented night and day forever and ever.”
- **Revelation 20:15**, “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
- **Revelation 21:8**, “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.”

Eternity Where?

Whether it will be with God in Heaven or with Satan in Hell. Everybody who is reading this material is going to one place or the other. In Deuteronomy Chapter 3:9, God says, *"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."*

Eternal punishment or annihilation? There are some who teach that annihilation is what Hell is all about. They say that the wicked dead are annihilated at death, never to be brought back into existence. Others teach that they are annihilated in Hell, and then Jehovah Witnesses, for example, say that the wicked are annihilated at death then recreated to be given a second chance, but those who refuse this second chance for eternal life will be annihilated and will cease to exist. The following statement is taken from a Jehovah Witness website: *"Some Bible translations use the word "hell" for the Hebrew word Sheol and the matching Greek word Hades, both of which refer to the common grave of mankind."*

Let me repeat it. They say: *"Some Bible translations use the word "hell" for the Hebrew word Sheol and the matching Greek word Hades..."* That part of their statement is correct. They go on to say: *"...both of which refer to the common grave of mankind."* That is incorrect.

If “hell” means the grave, how is it that a body never goes to a *Sheol*, but it goes to a *queber*, which is the Hebrew word for grave 37 times. A *Sheol* is never on earth in the Old Testament, but a *queber*, the Hebrew word for grave, is on the earth 32 times. Man is never put into a *Sheol*, but he's put into a *queber* 33 times. Man never makes a *Sheol*, but he makes a *queber* or a grave six times. Man never touches a *Sheol*, but he touches a *queber* or a grave six times.

Herbert W. Armstrong said in his booklet "Is There a Real Hell Fire?" I quote, *"The Greek word Hades simply means pit or grave."* That is absolute foolishness and shows a complete ignorance of what the Bible teaches. What did Jesus say? In Matthew 23, verse 33, He said, *"...how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"* That word is Hades. Everybody who dies goes to the grave. He couldn't possibly be talking about how can you escape the grave. In Mark 9:43, Jesus talked about those who would go into Hell—that is, Hades— *"...into the fire that never shall be quenched."* What kind of a grave is that?

We're going to look at the verses that people use to say that at death those who do not go to Heaven are simply annihilated, and it will be an observation in Bible ignorance concerning those who promote this position. One of the verses they use is Second Thessalonians 1:9, where we read, *"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."* One has to wonder what part of "everlasting" is too difficult to understand. The verse speaks of the destruction being everlasting. If this verse teaches annihilation, why is the word "everlasting" even there? All it would need to say is, *"Who shall be punished with destruction."* No. The destruction is everlasting.

They use Job 19:10 that says, *"He hath destroyed me on every side."* It's foolish to use that verse to try to promote annihilation. Was Job annihilated and still lived to tell us about it? Job 21:17 says, *"How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them!"* Could they be annihilated more than once? They use this phrase "put out" saying that's annihilation. The Hebrew word translated "destruction" here has been translated "calamity" seventeen times. Their calamity will come upon them, he says.

The last part of First Thessalonians 1:9 refers to those who will go from the presence of the Lord. Those who use this verse to teach annihilation say that no one could go out of the presence of God because God is omnipresent and they would have to be put out of existence in order to be out of His presence. Well, in Genesis 4:16 Cain *"went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden."* Cain was not annihilated. He went out from the presence of the Lord and he dwelt in the land of Nod. Those who are banished from the presence of the Lord are banished from His presence in Heaven. They are not annihilated.

Another verse they like to use is John 3:16. It says, *"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."* The Greek word rendered "perish" here is found in Luke chapter 15:17, where the prodigal son said, *"I perish with hunger!"* He was not annihilated. Then in Second Peter 3:6 it says, *"Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished,"* but the world was not put out of existence. The world was not annihilated.

Another verse they use is Psalm 1:6. It says, *"...but the way of the ungodly shall perish."* Now, this verse is not referring to the ungodly people perishing. It plainly tells us *"the way"* of the ungodly shall perish. The word in the Hebrew that is translated "perish" here has been translated "lose" ten times. The way of the ungodly is the way of losers.

They use Psalm Chapter 92:7. It says, *"When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever."* One has to wonder what part of "forever" is too difficult to understand. The Hebrew word translated "forever" here has been translated "everlasting" twice; it's been translated "evermore," and it's been translated "perpetually." It says they will be destroyed

forever. If they're just going to be annihilated, why is the phrase "for ever" included here? Why doesn't it just say they will be destroyed? Because they won't be. They will be in the process of being destroyed forever without ending.

Another verse they use is Psalm 37:20. It says, "*But the wicked shall perish, and ...they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.*" It is important to look at verses in every portion of Scripture we study in the context in which we find the words. This is another example of taking verses out of context to prove an opinion. The word "wicked" occurs fourteen times in Psalm 37. The phrase "cut off" occurs five times, and "cut down" occurs once. The word "land" occurs three times and the word "earth" occurs twice. The context concerning the wicked in this verse has to do with the wicked being cut off from the earth, verse 9, cut off from his place, verse 10, from the earth, verse 22, and his seed being cut off from the land, verses 28 and 29. Verse 20 refers to being consumed into smoke in the same sense as when the psalmist prayed and said in Psalm 102 and verses 2 and 3, "*...I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily. For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.*" In both Psalm 37 and Psalm 102, the context has absolutely nothing to do with Hell.

Another verse used to promote annihilation is Psalm 69:28, where it says, "*Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.*" Psalm 69 is a prophetic psalm referring to the crucifixion of Christ and those who crucified Him. Psalm 69:28 refers to those who rejected Christ being blotted out of the book of the living. The word "living" has been translated "life" 144 times, and concerning the Book of Life, we read in Revelation 20, verse 12, "*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works,*" and verse 15 says, "*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*" Jesus said in Matthew 18:8 and Matthew 25:41 that that fire is everlasting, and in Matthew 25:46 Jesus continued, "*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.*" Psalm 69:28 says they are blotted out of the book of the living. It does not say that they are eternally blotted out as human beings.

Another verse they use is Psalm 34:16, which reads, "*The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.*" The context here is very simple. The remembrance of them is cut off. This verse has absolutely nothing to do with anybody going to Heaven or Hell.

Then in Proverbs 24:20 we have this verse that they use: "*For there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.*" Proverbs 24:20 refers to the wicked man's candle being put out, not his life. In Job 21:17 we read, "*How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them!*" To suggest the candle or the destruction represents the life of the evil man in this verse would read "*How oft is the life of the wicked man put out!*" That makes no sense whatsoever.

Proverbs 31:18 refers to the virtuous woman where we read "*She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.*" Does that mean if she has good merchandise, she'll never die? In Daniel 2:35 they use this verse: "*...the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.*" The context of Daniel 2:35 refers to the nations and has nothing to do with individual judgment. This is another example of taking only parts of some verses and taking them out of context to attempt to prove an opinion.

They use Isaiah 1:28, "*And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.*"

In Isaiah Chapter 1:1, we see who this Book is written to. It says, *"The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem..."* Verse 4 refers to sinful nations. Verse 19 reads, *"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."* Verse 27 says, *"Zion shall be redeemed with judgment..."* Verse 28 says, *"...and they"*—the nations—*"that forsake the LORD shall be consumed,"* and it has been translated "end" 44 times. This verse has nothing to do with individuals. It is speaking of nations that shall be consumed ("end") because they forsake the Lord.

They use Obadiah 1:16 that says, *"...they shall be as though they had not been."* This is another example of taking parts of verses and taking them out of context to prove something. Obadiah 1:1 reads, *"The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning Edom..."* Verse 8 says, *"Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?"* Verse 18 refers to the house of Esau being stubble. Verse 16 says, *"...they shall be as though they had not been."* This has absolutely nothing to do with individuals. It has something to do with the context in which it is written, the vision of Obadiah concerning Edom and those nations in that day.

Again they use Malachi 4:1, *"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."* The context of Malachi chapter 4 looks forward to the Great Tribulation period. It has nothing to do with supposed annihilation of sinners in the Lake of Fire.

Matthew 10:28, is a verse they like to use. It says, *"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."* The word "destroy" is used 92 times in the New Testament. The Greek word has been translated "lose" 22 times, "be lost" five times, and "lost" four times. Jesus said in Matthew 10:39, *"He that findeth his life shall lose it"*—same word—*"and he that loseth"*—same word—*"his life for my sake shall find it."* He was obviously not talking about annihilation.

In Luke 9:25 Jesus said, *"For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"* This is the same word used here as used in Matthew 10:28. "Lose himself" is obviously not talking about annihilation. In Luke 15:4, Jesus said, *"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose"*—same word in the Greek—*"one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost"*—the same word that was used back in Matthew 28 translated "destroy"—*"until he find it?"* Obviously the sheep that he found was not annihilated.

In Luke 15:8 Jesus says, *"Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose"*—same word—*"one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?"* The coin was not annihilated. Luke 15:24, *"For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost"*—same word—*"and is found."* The prodigal son was obviously not annihilated. In Revelation 20:10 it says, *"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."* If you read Revelation, you'll find that the beast and the false prophet were put there one thousand years earlier, and they were still there. They were not annihilated.

They use Matthew 7:13 where Jesus said, *"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."*

Now, we need to notice the context.” In Matthew Chapter 5:1, it says “*they went up into a mountain.*” In Matthew Chapter 8:1 it says “*they came down from that mountain*”, and everything in between was part of what we call The Sermon on the Mount.

Chapter 5:1 tells us that Jesus was speaking to “*His disciples.*” In Matthew Chapter 5:2, it says “*He taught them.*” Concerning disciples, sometimes in the Bible we read the word “*disciples*”; sometimes we read “*the disciples*,” and sometimes we read “*his disciples.*” When we read the phrase “*his disciples*,” it's referring to the twelve. In this portion of Scripture, He could not possibly have been talking to an unsaved crowd.

Consider the following statements made by Christ, non of which could have been made to the crowd in general.

- **Matthew 5:12**, “*...great is your reward in heaven.*”;
- **Matthew 5:13**, “*Ye are the salt of the earth.*”
- **Matthew 5:16**, “*...your Father which is in heaven.*”
- **Matthew 5:45**, “*...your Father which is in heaven.*”
- **Matthew 5:48**, “*...your Father which is in heaven.*”
- **Matthew 6:1**, “*...your Father which is in heaven.*”
- **Matthew 6:26**, “*...your heavenly Father.*”
- **Matthew 6:32**, “*...your heavenly Father.*”
- **Matthew 5:14**, “*...ye are the light of the world.*”

In Matthew 7:13-14, still speaking to His disciples Jesus said, “*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*”

He is referring to Christians concerning finding true follow-ship and true fellowship and true discipleship with the Lord. The word “*destruction*” in this verse is translated from the Greek word that has been translated “*waste*” in two other occasions, and He's saying to these Christians, “*If you're not going to go through the narrow gate, if you're going to take the broad path, you're going to waste your Christian life.*” This portion of Scripture has absolutely nothing to do with anybody finding a gate that would lead them to Heaven or to Hell.

Then in Philippians chapter 3:19, they quote, “*Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.*” Again, the word that is translated “*destruction*” here has been translated “*waste*” twice. The same word is translated “*perdition*” in Hebrews 10:39 where we read, “*But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*” This obviously is not referring to annihilation.

They use First Corinthians 3:17 that says, “*If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy...*” Here's another example of using only a part of a verse taking it out of a context and trying to prove something that it doesn't prove. The end of this verse reads, “*...for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*” This verse has nothing to do with the subject of life or death for unsaved people. It is referring to Christians. The context is Christians living the Christian life. The words “*defiled*” and “*destroy*” are the same Greek words. They've been translated “*corrupt*” six times, and they need to be read in that context. Again, the context here is Christians living the Christian life. It has nothing to do with unsaved people.

“God Is Love”

Their argument is "*God is a God of love*", He would never have created a real literal Hell. If you ask them how they know that God is love they refer to First John 4:16 that says, "*God is love.*"

The Bible also says...

- **Deuteronomy 4:24**, "*God is a consuming fire.*"
- **Psalm 7:11**, "*God is angry with the wicked every day.*"
- **Psalm 50:6**, "*God is judge.*"
- **Psalm 75:7**, "*God is the judge.*"
- **Psalm 89:7**, "*God is greatly to be feared.*"
- **Hebrews 12:29**, "*God is a consuming fire.*"
- **Romans 1:18**, "*The wrath of God is revealed from heaven.*"

You can decide whether you're going to believe Jesus or whether you're not. Quite frankly, I think it's the smart thing to believe the Lord. Your eternal destiny is at stake.

Jesus said, "*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*" (Luke 13:3).

