

September 13, 2025

The Way

The West Valley End-Time Ministries Newsletter

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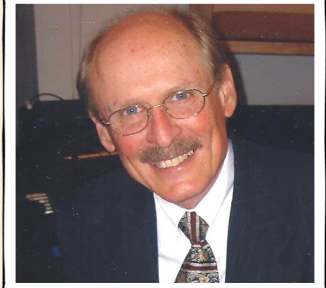
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Darrell Chilson, Pastor



Jessica Lindsey, Bible Instructor

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Acts of the Apostles

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“We are living in the season of Christ's return.”



Bible Study

Acts 22

Paul Speaks to the Crowd

1 "Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense." **2** When they heard him speak to them in Aramaic, they became very quiet. Then Paul said: **3** "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today. **4** I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, **5** as the high priest and all the Council can themselves testify. I even obtained letters from them to their associates in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished.

6 "About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. **7** I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?' **8** " 'Who are you, Lord?' I asked. " 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting,' he replied. **9** My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me. **10** " 'What shall I do, Lord?' I asked. " 'Get up,' the Lord said, 'and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.'

11 My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the brilliance of the light had blinded me. **12** "A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. **13** He stood beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him. **14** "Then he said: 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. **15** You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard. **16** And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

17 "When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance **18** and saw the Lord speaking to me. 'Quick!' he said. 'Leave Jerusalem immediately, because the people here will not accept your testimony about me.' **19** " 'Lord,' I replied, 'these people know that I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who believe in you. **20** And when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.' **21** "Then the Lord said to me, 'Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.' "



Bible Study

Paul the Roman Citizen

22 The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, "Rid the earth of him! He's not fit to live!" **23** As they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and flinging dust into the air, **24** the commander ordered that Paul be taken into the barracks. He directed that he be flogged and interrogated in order to find out why the people were shouting at him like this. **25** As they stretched him out to flog him, Paul said to the centurion standing there, "Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who hasn't even been found guilty?"

26 When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and reported it. "What are you going to do?" he asked. "This man is a Roman citizen." **27** The commander went to Paul and asked, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" "Yes, I am," he answered. **28** Then the commander said, "I had to pay a lot of money for my citizenship." "But I was born a citizen," Paul replied. **29** Those who were about to interrogate him withdrew immediately. The commander himself was alarmed when he realized that he had put Paul, a Roman citizen, in chains. **30** The commander wanted to find out exactly why Paul was being accused by the Jews. So the next day he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the members of the Sanhedrin to assemble. Then he brought Paul and had him stand before them.

In the News

In Memory of Charlie Kirk

Last Wednesday, a warrior for truth and right, a Christian, (and an observer of the seventh day Sabbath) was assassinated as he spoke to a crowd of young people at Utah Valley University. Charlie Kirk was a person I respected and knew to be a voice for Christian values in a nation where evil has triumphed in recent years under the guise of “diversity, equity and inclusion.” The suspected assassin left a high-powered rifle, ammunition and signs of sympathy for woke values behind and was, in my opinion, likely an instrument of liberalism in our nation. He shot Charlie in the neck from 200 yards away, much like the assassination attempt on our president in July of last year.



Turning Point USA is headquartered in Phoenix, AZ

In this newsletter, I wish to honor Charlie Kirk for his stand for truth and right, for his courage to face the dangers he knew were there because of his voice, and I wish to lift up his wife and family before our coming Savior in an appeal for His grace and comfort to attend them in their grief. We have lost a warrior to the enemy. However, I believe that in death, his witness will follow him for good in America and among those who knew him.



Just Before Charlie's Death



Charlie's Family



Suspected Assassin

Thank you for your voice, Charlie!

PC



Honest Questions

Honest Question #1: How do you answer the statement that Christ's second coming is not literal but spiritual, since He comes to Christians at death?

Bible Answer – (Jesus' Own Words):

"As the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ... Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:27, 29-31.

Comments: I don't know of any text in the Bible that says that Christ comes to Christians at death, nor do I know of any text that says that Christians go into the presence of Christ at death. The Bible says that the dead sleep an unconscious sleep until they are resurrected from the dead to meet their Maker. We studied this in depth in our previous issue. No one in the Bible who has ever been resurrected from death ever tells the story of meeting any Divine Being at death – neither Lazarus, the son of the widow of Nain, the daughter of Jairus, Dorcas, Eutychus, nor even the son of the widow of Zarephath whom Elijah raised from the dead. None of these individuals are recorded as saying they saw God or heaven or anything else after their death, because they were "asleep" in death until they were raised from the dead.

So, the question remains, is Christ's second coming literal or spiritual? The truth of the inspired Word of God is that **there will never be in the experience of man anything more literal, more glorious, more visible, more audible, nor anything more spectacular than the second coming – the return of Jesus Christ to earth!**

Revelation 19 describes Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven, riding a white horse and all the armies of heaven following Him! John says "every eye will see Him," even those who put Him on the cross! Paul says that when He comes, there will be the sound of a mighty trumpet. Cemeteries will come alive as Jesus calls the saved back to life. Jesus will send His angels to every part of the earth to gather the saved into the clouds to meet Him in the air! There will be absolutely nothing quiet or secret about the return of Jesus. It will be the most dramatic event of human history, and no one will miss it! The Bible also says that when Jesus returns there will be a great earthquake, and the wicked, in their terror, will cry for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and "hide them from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb." In contrast, when the followers of Christ see Him coming in the heavens, it will be more wonderful than words can express! They will cry out, "Lo, this is our God! We have waited for Him, and He will save us!" Yes, the second coming of Jesus will be very literal and very real to both the saved and the lost.



Honest Questions

Honest Question #2: Does 1 Thessalonians 4:14 prove that the saved go immediately to heaven [at death], or remain in the grave for some period of time?

Bible Text In Question:

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.”
1 Thessalonians 4:14.

Comments: This is a particularly good question and one which at first glance makes it appear that God brings with Him from heaven to earth those who “sleep in Jesus” at the time of His return – the very subject of the surrounding verses. So, let’s take a look at the entire passage. We must understand this verse in the context of its setting.

“**13** I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. **14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. **15** For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. **16** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. **18** Therefore comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

First of all, what is the condition of the righteous spoken of in these verses “who sleep in Jesus”? They’re “dead”! They are in their graves when Jesus comes and will come forth at the call of Christ. His call is described as “a shout.” This scene is reminiscent of the day when Jesus called Lazarus, who had been dead for four days, from the dead – from the grave, his place of “sleep” (John 11:43). The only difference in this call of Christ in the passage above is that **all the saved** who have died from the beginning of time will be called from their sleep of death! – Adam and Eve, even Mary, the mother of Jesus! So, Jesus doesn’t “bring” the righteous dead to earth with Him when He returns – they’re in their graves where they were buried, waiting for Jesus to come, to call them forth from the dead, and to take them back to heaven with the living saved!

When Sammy and I were with our daughter Mischelle one day in Georgia several years ago, she took us to the old Buckhead Baptist Church to look at what is a historical site of the Civil War. Across the street from the church is the church cemetery, where several “saints” of that day were buried. On their tombstones were written phrases like, “Sleeping in Jesus Until the Resurrection”; “Asleep in Jesus”; and “Sleeping Until the Morning.” Those believers were Baptists of nearly 200 years ago! That’s what Baptists believed then!



Honest Questions

So, let's look again at this verse in question. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 4:14. The word "bring" in this verse appears to suggest that Jesus brings **from heaven to earth** those who are asleep in Jesus at the time of His coming. But it is important to note that Paul doesn't specify from whence He brings them. He only makes clear their destination – they "meet the Lord in the air, and thus we [all the saved] shall always be with the Lord."

In the Greek, the words "bring with" are the Greek word *ag'-o*, which is used in the Bible in other places to say, "to lead, take with one," "to lead by taking hold of, and this way to bring to the point of destination," "to conduct, "to lead away." (Greek Interlinear). Perhaps the best example of how this word *ag'-o* is used in other places other places in the Bible is in Matthew 21:1, 2, 7 where Jesus asks His disciples to go get a donkey and her colt and **bring it to Him** from the place where it is tied up.

"Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and **bring [ag'-o] them to Me**. ... So **they brought [ag'-o]** the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them.'" Matthew 21:1, 2, 7.

Thus, in using this word *ag'-o*, Paul is consistent in his account of Jesus coming from heaven to earth to gather together all the saved and **bring them with Him back to heaven** to inherit their promised heavenly home! Nothing in this text suggests that the saved go immediately to heaven at death, but rather, it's one more time in the Bible that we're told the dead wait in their graves until Jesus comes again, calls them "with a shout" to come forth from their graves and **brings them back to heaven** (from whence He came) with Him! Isaiah describes the resurrection:

"Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isaiah 26:19.

Doctrines of Demons

“The Lie About Hell”

Many of you have seen the 2004 movie produced and directed by Mel Gibson, “The Passion of the Christ.” I haven’t seen the movie. The trailer and marketing clips portrayed such a gruesome and demonic treatment of Jesus that I couldn’t bear to see such evil, offensive scenes acted out **again** by human beings – Christians! I once attended a different re-enactment of the crucifixion of Jesus at an Assembly of God church in Phoenix as part of a celebration of Easter. It was all I could do to stay seated in my pew, and during some of the scenes, I had to just sit there and close my eyes as people, claiming to be followers of Christ, cried out, “Crucify Him, Crucify Him!”

What probably set “The Passion of the Christ” apart from all other previous portrayals of the crucifixion of Christ is the extent to which Mel Gibson went to depict the blood, the cruelty, and the abject evil of that Day. And that is what most Christians envision when they imagine the scenes of Calvary – the physical agony, the nails, the blood, the beating, the crown of thorns, etc. And while all of the torture of Jesus is certainly a huge part of what He went through that day, no one ever talks about what that Day was **really** all about **for Jesus!**

Other human beings have experienced physical torture as great or greater than Jesus did, also from the hands of evil men. What Jesus went through **physically** at the hands of His enemies was no greater than what others have been through. What makes Jesus’ torture unthinkable is that the Victim of their cruelty was the very Son of God! But for Jesus, it wasn’t the **physical torture** He endured that makes His death so important to us! It’s something much greater that He endured, and it’s only by understanding what Jesus experienced that weekend that we can understand the true nature of hell – the subject of this treatise. **We must remember that what Jesus did in death as our Savior is what satisfied the sentence of eternal death and the condemnation of hell for every sinner!**

When Jesus died on Calvary, He, the sinless One, was bearing the guilt of the sin of the world!

“As it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so **Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many**. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. Hebrews 9:27, 28.

And as you will see, that’s what made His suffering so much greater than anything any other human being has ever been through! That may not be as dramatic as the visual scenes at Calvary, but it’s the most important part of the Calvary story, and we must look at the greater sufferings of Jesus that literally crushed out His life!

Doctrines of Demons

Some Background Necessary for an Understanding of the Death of Hell

When Adam and Eve were created, they were told by God that they could eat of “every tree in the garden” **except** for “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Genesis 2:16, 17. God told them that in the day they ate of that one tree, they would **die**. Paul says that when Adam sinned, sin entered the world and **death** through sin,” and he says, that “the wages of sin is **death**.” Romans 5:12; 3:31. It’s important here that we identify and distinguish between **two different kinds of death** the Bible speaks of in order to understand the meaning of Christ’s death on Calvary – and the nature of hell!

“The First Death”

As a result of the entrance of sin into the human family, death is the end of every human experience on earth. (We studied death in our last issue, and the Bible says, “It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes [the] judgment.” Hebrews 9:27 ESV). God told Adam of this death when He said to him, “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.” Genesis 3:19. But Adam was 930 years old when he died the “first death.” Genesis 5:5. The first death that Scripture speaks of is the unconscious “sleep” that every person will experience when they die. But in “the first resurrection” when Jesus comes to claim those who have placed their faith in Him, “the dead in Christ will rise” from their sleep of death to “meet Christ in the air.” 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17.

“The Second Death”

The “second death” is the death God told Adam he would die as a result of eating of the tree God had forbidden them to eat from. Again, He said to them, “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Genesis 2:17. The second death of Scripture is an **eternal** death – a death from which there is no return to life – no resurrection. It is the death that occurs at the time of the destruction of “both body and soul.” Jesus said, “Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to **destroy both soul and body in hell**.” (Matthew 10:28). The Bible actually calls this death “the second death.” “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such **the second death** has no power....” Revelation 20:6. The second death is the eternal death of the devil and his angels, of the wicked, and of those who have refused the offer of God’s saving grace. **It is the death which separates the soul from life and from God for eternity! It is the death of hell.** And this is the death Jesus died for you and me – the death which we are invited to claim as our own by faith. Jesus claimed and bore our sin and guilt at Calvary and then died **the second death**. Jesus was judged and condemned for our sin, in which he had no part, that we might claim **His** perfect life — and **His** eternal death — as our own, something in which we had no part! He died the death that was ours that we might have the life which was His!

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When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane the evening before His crucifixion, what do you think was He was experiencing when He said to His disciples, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." Matthew 26:38. What was Jesus experiencing that evening when Luke describes Him in this verse? "And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Luke 22:44. What was Jesus experiencing in Gethsemane when He said to His Father, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." ... And again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done." Matthew 26:39, 42.

At that moment, Jesus was experiencing the weight of our sin and guilt, and it would have killed Him that night, before going to the cross, had not "an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him." Luke 22:43. Paul says, "God made Him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5:23. And in Gethsemane, Jesus experienced in part the condemnation which was ours for our sin! He felt the effects of sin, the consequences of sin, the distance sin eternally creates between the sinner and a holy God, and a distance it was even then creating between Him and His Father. Thus His pleading with His Father to "remove this cup." The next day on Calvary, as the sin and guilt of the world was fully placed upon Him, the sense of guilt and the distance He felt from His Father wrenched from His soul the cry, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me!" And then, it crushed out His life!

That day on the cross, Jesus died the eternal death that is rightfully ours. He experienced that eternal separation from God and life – that second death that the wicked and the unbelieving will experience when the fires of hell consume them, never to live again. Jesus literally experienced hell for you and me that we might never have to. Jesus experienced the distance and darkness of "the second death" so you and I never have to. When Jesus died on the cross, He felt the reality of the **eternal** death and separation from His Father. At that moment, He felt lost forever, never to live again! That's what He was willing to go through for our eternal life! Not the pain, not the abuse, not the blood or the humiliation, but the "forever, never again" of eternal death! Had He not been "the perfect Sacrifice," "the spotless, sinless Lamb of God," He would have never come forth from the tomb that following Sunday morning! But in His death, God's justice for our sin was satisfied, and God's justice for Christ the Sinless One was confirmed when He came forth from that tomb, victorious over death – not just "the first death" which we die when we get old, but "the second death," the death of hell, which our faith in Christ now saves us from!

So, what is hell all about? It's the end of life for the lost – FOREVER – and the end of the existence of the devil and his angels – FOREVER – and yes, **the just punishment by fire for Satan and his angels, for evil and evil doers.** But it is not a **never-ending fire** which tortures those who are thrown into the "lake of fire"

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spoken of in Revelation! That is a **lie of Satan believed by Christians**, which makes God a “monster” and suggests that He is evil Himself, not just for the punishment of evil, but for the never-ending torture of the wicked. When the wicked receive that which is a just punishment from a holy God, the fires of hell will completely **DESTROY** them **FOREVER!** This is what the Bible says about the destruction of those who have refused God’s offer of salvation.

The Testimony of Scripture

- ♦ At the very end of the Old Testament, the prophet Malachi describes the fate of both the lost and the saved: "For behold, the day is coming, **burning like an oven**, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," says the LORD of hosts, "that **will leave them neither root nor branch**. But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves. You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do this," says the LORD of hosts. Malachi 4:1-3.
- ♦ The heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. ... The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and **the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up**. 2 Peter 3:7, 10.
- ♦ Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth ... to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. **They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them**. Revelation 20:7-9. **Note: “Hell” is the earth on fire**, not some place in space! And it is the very same earth on which God creates the new world in which we live forevermore **after** the fires of hell have accomplished the purposes of God in destroying evil and those who perpetrated it upon humanity!
- ♦ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16 – **Note: In this well-known verse, “everlasting life” is presented in contrast to the fate of the lost who “perish”. They don’t have “everlasting life” in hell!**

Concluding Remarks:

Satan’s lie about the nature of hell – a lie believed by many Christians, is a direct attack on the character of God. By this lie, Satan intends to portray God as unreasonable, unjust, cruel, and evil, just like himself! This doctrine of demons says that God is **not** a God of love but One of retribution, punishing sinners in the fires of hell **throughout eternity!** — **eternal life in the fires of hell!** It says that God’s justice can never be satisfied except by the eternal torture of the sinner. This doctrine is as evil as its author, the devil.

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The truth is, God is a God of love, not One of cruel retribution. It is **because** He loves “the world” that He was willing to GIVE us His Son to take our place in life and death that we might have a life we don’t deserve – **for eternity!** (John 3:16). Consider for a moment what Jesus went through to save us. He endured the scorn of humanity, the ugliness of sin around Him, and the abuse of “religious people” for His whole life on earth. But even more, that day on Calvary, **He bore the weight of the sin and guilt of the world and experienced eternal death Himself. He did all that for us! And He experienced the pain of all that to its fullest extent!**

How the destruction of the wicked, both Satan and his hosts, and the multitude of people who have chosen to follow him – how their destruction is going to affect this God of love is stated in the following verse:

“‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die?’” Ezekiel 33:11.

The story of David and his son Absalom tells us of God’s love for the lost and the heartbreak He will experience when they are cast into “the lake of fire.” David’s son Absalom is a type of Lucifer, the angel God created and elevated to a position of prominence in the courts of heaven before the creation of man. Lucifer was “the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.” He was “the anointed cherub – perfect in his ways from the day he was created, until iniquity was found in his heart.” But his “heart was lifted up because of his beauty.” Ezekiel 28:12, 14, 15, 17.

Absalom was also “beautiful” – handsome. “In all Israel there was no one who was praised as much as Absalom for his good looks. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.” 2 Samuel 14:25.

But both Lucifer and Absalom were treasonous – each seeking the position and worship due only to their “creators.” Lucifer attempted to steal the affections and allegiance of all the other angels in heaven and supplant the King of the universe. He said, “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God – I will be like the Most High.” Isaiah 14:13, 14. Absalom also attempted to steal the throne from David, the king of Israel, by “stealing the hearts of the men of Israel.” (2 Samuel 15:6). In the end, Lucifer (Satan) will pay for his treason against God with his life, just as Absalom paid for his treason against his father David with his life, hanging from a tree by the hair of his head and slaughtered with the spears of Joab, the trusted commander of David’s army.

But the parallels don’t end here. When David heard that the son of his heart had died, he wept over him and cried out, “O my son Absalom – my son, my son Absalom – **if only I had died in your place!** O Absalom, my son, my son!” 2 Samuel 18:33. **And thus it will be for the One who DID take the place of the sinner in death that he might live.** In the Judgment, as Jesus acts as both Savior and Judge, **His heart will break** as

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He sees even Lucifer, and all of the lost of humanity experience **the very death He experienced at Calvary “in their place!”** For no one but Jesus can know what that will be like for those for whom He died – the lostness, the darkness of the second death, the agony of justice for their sin, and the knowledge of what they forfeited in rejecting the offer of Christ – all that Jesus felt as He bore the sin of the world and suffered its consequences in Gethsemane and on Calvary!

Footnotes: An Analysis of Verses Which Seem to Support the False Doctrine of an Eternally Burning Hell

- ♦ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet were. And they will be **tormented day and night forever and ever**. Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. **This is the second death.** And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 20 10-15. **Note that the “torment day and night forever and ever” is also called “the second death.” The meaning of the words “forever” and “eternal” in regard to the fate of the lost can be reconciled with the teachings of the rest of Scripture by recognizing that sometimes these words really translate to “forever/eternal until it’s over,” as seen in the verses which follow! All Scripture must be consistent with itself, but we must also recognize that sometimes some words are used differently in the Bible and have different meanings in the context of the verse, and these two words are examples of that principle and illustrate how the doctrine of hell has been misunderstood and falsely taught in Christian churches of today.**

Note Also the Following Verses:

- ♦ Sodom and Gomorrah ... are set forth as **an example**, suffering the vengeance **of eternal fire**. Jude 1:7. **Note:** The “eternal fire” which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah burned “eternally” until everything in those cities was destroyed. Then the fire went out! It certainly isn’t burning today! It was “unquenchable”, but lasted only until the purpose of God was accomplished.
- ♦ “His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will **burn up** the chaff **with unquenchable fire.**” Matthew 3:12. **Note:** “Unquenchable” is not the same as forever or eternal! This fire was “unquenchable” and could not be extinguished!
- ♦ “If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the **everlasting fire**. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast [it] from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye,

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rather than having two eyes, to be cast into **hell fire**. Matthew 18:8, 9. **Note:** Again, the fire here described is “everlasting” until it has accomplished the purpose of God. The **results** of the fires of hell are everlasting, not the fire itself!

- ◆ These shall be punished with **everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.... 2 Thessalonians 1:9. **Note:** “Everlasting” and “destruction” in regard to the fires of hell go together! The fire of hell is “everlasting” in its work. Don’t forget that in Revelation the new earth is created over the charred earth upon which evil has been destroyed. As Malachi says, the righteous will tread upon the ashes of evil, for our present earth is the location of hell, and God will restore the earth to its original perfect state after evil is destroyed with unquenchable fire!
 - ◆ "...then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him **forever**. Exodus 21:6. **Note:** Or as long as he lived! Not the same “forever” as the word we are used to using!
 - ◆ But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "Not until the child is weaned; then I will take him, that he may appear before the LORD and remain there **forever**. ... Therefore I also have lent him to the LORD; **as long as he lives** he shall be lent to the LORD." 1 Samuel 1:22, 28. **Note:** Again, “or as long as he lived!” Not the same as “forever.”
 - ◆ I went down to the moorings of the mountains; the earth with its bars closed behind me **forever**; yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD, my God. Jonah 2:6. **Note:** Here “forever” is in reference to the three days and nights that Jonah was in the belly of the whale!
 - ◆ And the smoke of their torment **ascends forever and ever**; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name. Revelation 14:11. **Note:** Again, the consequences of the fires never end! In fact, the smoke of the fires of hell are said to ascend into the infinite universe “forever and ever!” The fire doesn’t burn forever, but the smoke ascends into infinity, a fitting description of the finality of the destruction of evil!
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