

Big Picture Bible Study

Lesson 12: The Story Ends

THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

The Bible is clear that in the end of the world things will be unlike they have ever been before, and just before those final events, the world culture will do its own pleasures and ridicule the Bible:

- **II Peter 3:3-4** “³knowing this first: that *scoffers will come in the last days*, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴and saying, “**WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING? FOR SINCE THE FATHERS FELL ASLEEP, ALL THINGS CONTINUE AS THEY WERE FROM THE BEGINNING OF CREATION.**”

Just before the Second Coming, many events will be taking place. **Revelation 17** describes how the kings of this world will give power over to the beast in one final move. **Revelation 18** describes the impact of the Latter Rain and the Loud Cry and the fall of Babylon. **Revelation 19** describes the church that has been purified through the Time of Trouble, the scene of Jesus in the Second Coming, and the death of all wicked by the sword that comes out of Jesus' mouth – a symbol.

Nonbelievers have long ridiculed this prophesied event. Jesus said in **Luke 21:34** that the day would come “*unexpectedly.*” They point to the many number of generations that have come and gone, awaiting Christ’s return, and they say that it will never happen. In **I Kings 18:44** when Elijah prayed for rain after victory on Mount Carmel, he prayed for the promised blessing seven times and then saw “*a cloud, as small as a man’s hand, rising out of the sea.*” Soon this will happen to us:

- **Matthew 24:30** “³⁰Then 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.”

Maranatha p. 278, 279 “It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of His chosen. With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God’s covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness... It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Everything in nature seems turned out of its course. The streams cease to flow. Dark, heavy clouds come up and clash against each other. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying: “It is done” (**Revelation 16:17**). The powers of heaven will be shaken at the voice of God. Then the sun, moon, and stars will be moved out of their places. They will not pass away, but be shaken by the voice of God. Dark, heavy clouds came up and clashed against each other. The atmosphere parted and rolled back; then we could look up through the open space in Orion, whence came the voice of God.”

Isaiah 34:4 says that, “*all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll.*” When Peter repeats the famous words of Christ in **II Peter 3:10**, that the day would come “*as a thief in the night,*” he adds that “*the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.*” Can you imagine this incredible picture?! It will be the end of this world as we know it. God will have to start over with a new heavens and a new earth.

- **Revelation 1:7** “⁷Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”
- **Revelation 19:11-16** “¹¹Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

Maranatha, p. 288 “Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man’s hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it as it draws nearer the earth, becoming lighter and more glorious, until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a “man of sorrows,” to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. “Faithful and True,” “in righteousness he doth judge and make war.” And “the armies which were in heaven” (**Revelation 19:11, 14**) follow Him. With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms—“ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendor. “His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light” (**Habakkuk 3:3, 4**). As the living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head; but a diadem of glory rests on His holy brow. His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun. “And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords” (**Revelation 19:16**). With uplifted heads, with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shining upon them, with rejoicing that their redemption draweth nigh, they [the living saints], go forth to meet the Bridegroom, saying. “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us.” ”

*This will be **visible**, it will be **audible** and it will **interrupt** whatever you’re doing; everyone will be **either translated or destroyed** by Christ’s glory.*

The Symbol of the Scapegoat

Notice a Sanctuary pattern. On the Day of Atonement (a symbol for the actions Christ will do at the time of the Judgment and the Second Coming), the high priest would do something very specific:

- **Leviticus 16:7-8** “⁷He shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁸Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat.”
- **Matthew 27:17, 21** “¹⁷Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” ...²¹The governor answered and said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” They said, “Barabbas!” ”

BARABBAS IN THE ARAMAIC: “BAR” SON OF, AND “ABBAS” FATHER

They had to choose between the son of the father and the **Son of the Father** just as we, when Satan appears as an angel of light, will have to choose between truth and error.

- **Leviticus 16:20-21** “²⁰And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. ²¹Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man.”



Very specifically and symbolically, the high priest carry the guilt of all the confessed sins of the house of Israel out of the Sanctuary and would lay hands on the scapegoat, transferring the guilt to lay upon the animal. When Jesus the true High Priest leaves the Heavenly Sanctuary in Heaven, He will lay hands on that old dragon and transfer the guilt of all the confessed sins of the world and lay them upon the author of all lies and the instigator of all temptation and sin.

- **Revelation 20:1-2** “¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ²He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;”

Jesus paid the price for our confessed sins, but Satan is guilty for causing us to commit them and is bound to the earth as scapegoat.

- **Great Controversy, p. 658** “Now the event takes place foreshadowed in the last solemn service of the Day of Atonement... In like manner, when the work of atonement in the heavenly sanctuary has been completed, then in the presence of God and heavenly angels and the hosts of the redeemed the sins of God's people will be placed upon Satan; he will be declared guilty of all the evil which he has caused them to commit. And as the scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, so Satan will be banished to the desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness.”

The Entrance Into Heaven

We begin our journey to Heaven by finishing the final earthly step in the plan of salvation. Now the earth is a desolate wasteland, home to Satan while he awaits the execution of his judgment.

- **Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, p. 66-67** “We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold and palms of victory. Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square. Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but few. All were perfectly satisfied with their crowns. And they were all clothed with a glorious white mantle from their shoulders to their feet. Angels were all about us as we marched over the sea of glass to the gate of the city. Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us, “*You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in.*” We all marched in and felt that we had a perfect right in the city.”
- **The Review and Harold, June 18, 1901** “The very One who gave His precious life for them, who by His grace moved their hearts to repentance, who awakened them to their need of repentance, receives them now into His joy. Oh, how they love Him! The realization of their hope is infinitely greater than their expectation. Their joy is complete, and they take their glittering crowns and cast them at their Redeemer’s feet.”

The Bible gives us a clear picture of the moment when the righteous redeemed walk into Heaven to stand before the throne of God, the Lamb's blood having washed away all their sins, they stand clothed in the righteousness of white robes.

- **Revelation 7:9-10** “⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!””
- **The Great Controversy, p. 646-647** “With unutterable love, Jesus welcomes His faithful ones to the joy of their Lord. The Saviour's joy is in seeing, in the kingdom of glory, the souls that have been saved by His agony and humiliation. And the redeemed will be sharers in His joy, as they behold, among the blessed, those who have been won to Christ through their prayers, their labors, and their loving sacrifice. As they gather about the great white throne, gladness unspeakable will fill their hearts, when they behold those whom they have won for Christ, and see that one has gained others, and these still others, all brought into the haven of rest, there to lay their crowns at Jesus' feet and praise Him through the endless cycles of eternity.”



THE CITY OF FIRE

Opening Question: according to the common teachings of the world, where is the place where people go to be burned forever and ever? Almost unanimously, the answer is “*Hell*.” But, by the same strategy that he has employed for countless ages, this is actually a counterfeit of the Devil.

Would it surprise you if I said that Heaven is the true “City of Fire?”

What Is God’s Physical Description?

The enemy has led our society to misunderstand God’s character. We do not see fire as a parallel for a good thing, even though many times the Bible uses fire to describe God’s physical appearance.

- **Hebrews 12:28-29** “²⁸Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹For our God is a consuming fire.” (**Deut. 4:24**)
- **Daniel 7:9-10** “⁹I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; ¹⁰a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.”
- **Ezekiel 1:27-28** “²⁷Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. ²⁸Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.” (**Ezekiel 8:2**)

- **Isaiah 66:15-16** “¹⁵For behold, the Lord will come with fire and with His chariots, like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. ¹⁶For by fire and by His sword the Lord will judge all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many.”

Let's get a clear picture of God: He is a being of fire (Heb. 9) sitting on a throne of fire (Ez. 1) who comes with fire (Is. 66) and has a fiery stream coming from His fiery throne (Dan. 7) in Heaven, a City of Fire.

Jesus on earth and in Heaven

- **Matthew 17:1-3** “¹Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ²and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. ³And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.”
- **Mark 9:3-4 (ESV)** “³and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.”
- **Revelation 1:14-16** “¹⁴His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.”
- **Psalm 50:3-4** “³Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. ⁴He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.”

Jesus was transfigured into a body of fiery white light (Mat. 17), has eyes of fire (Rev. 1), and a fire shall devour before Him in the Second Coming (Ps. 50)! Clearly, Heaven must be a “City of Fire.”

- **Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, p. 66** “Then Jesus' silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised His eyes and hands to heaven, and cried, “Awake! awake! awake! ye that sleep in the dust, and arise.” Then there was a mighty earthquake. The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted “Alleluia!” as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death, and in the same moment we were changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.”

Why Is Heaven A City Of Fire?

- **Song of Solomon 8:6-7** “⁶Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame. ⁷Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised.”

True love is compared to the burning coals of fire that cannot be put out. True love has a vehement flame and will burn forever in the heart of the lover. God's character is love—but not a love that we actually understand. It is a LOVE that is so powerful it burns like a flame of fire.

- **I John 4:8** “⁸He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

The fire of Heaven is not like our fire, but we don't have anything else to compare it with. The essence of the fire of Heaven is just LOVE!

- **Deuteronomy 33:2** “²And he said: “The Lord came from Sinai, and dawning on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints; from His right hand came a fiery law for them.”

Example #1: Beings In Heaven, Current Citizens Of The “City of Fire”

- **Ezekiel 1:13** “¹³As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.”

Example #2: Lucifer, An Ex-Citizen Of The “City of Fire”

- **Ezekiel 28:14** “¹⁴Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.”

Example #3: Adam And Eve, Fallen Citizens Of The “City of Fire”

- **Genesis 3:22-24** “²²And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: ²³Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. ²⁴So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

Example #4: Moses, Developing A Citizen Of The “City of Fire”

- **Exodus 3:2** “²And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.”

Example #5: Elijah, A New Citizen Of The “City of Fire”

- **II Kings 2:11-12** “¹¹And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.”
- **II Kings 6:17** “¹⁷And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”

Example #6: The Three Friends, Citizens Of The “City of Fire” In Faith

- **Daniel 3:17-18** “¹⁷If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. ¹⁸But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” **THIS IS ROCK-SOLID FAITH!**

Example #7: The 144,000, Established Citizens Of The “City of Fire”

- **Revelation 15:2** “²And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.”

Eternal Burning

- **Isaiah 33:14** “¹⁴The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness has seized the hypocrites: “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?””

The question is asked: “Who are they that will burn forever?”

THE DEVIL HAS DECEIVED MANY TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION WITH: “THE WICKED!”

- **Isaiah 33:15-16** “¹⁵He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, he who despises the gain of oppressions, who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil: ¹⁶He will dwell on high; his place of defense will be the fortress of rocks; bread will be given him, his water will be sure.”

Isaiah answers the question: “It is the righteous that will burn forever!”

THE DEVIL HAS TWISTED THE CHARACTER OF GOD AND BILLIONS BELIEVE ERROR

- **Isaiah 43:2** “¹But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine. ²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.”

This text will have its ultimate fulfillment in the Kingdom of Heaven, when we are given immortality as a gift at the Second Coming (and not before!) and we will be able to live in the presence of God.

God's Character	
What the world thinks:	God will burn the wicked forever and ever in eternal torment.
What is actually true:	God will bring the wicked to ash and burn the righteous forever and ever in eternal and passionate love.

The Devil has counterfeited many of God's truths and has tried to twist God's character. We need to base our beliefs ON THE BIBLE!

THE JURY, THE MILLENNIUM, AND THE NEW JERUSALEM

- **II Peter 2:4** “⁴For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;”

In Heaven, judgment could not take place because there was not a third-party; all of Heaven was polarized into only two groups: God and His angels: the accused – Lucifer and his angels: the accuser Every being was on one side or the other, so there needed to be a third-party jury to judge between them and to repopulate Heaven.

- **I Corinthians 6:3** “³Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?”

REVELATION 20: Judgment At The Second Coming

- **Revelation 20:1-2** “¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ²He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;”
- **Daniel 7:22** “²²until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.”

After the Second Coming, judgment is given to the saints. The judgment that began in 1844 decides who the jurors will be that go to Heaven and do the JUDICIAL REVIEW.

- **Isaiah 24:19-21** “¹⁹The earth is violently broken, the earth is split open, the earth is shaken exceedingly. ²⁰The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall totter like a hut; its transgression shall be heavy upon it, and it will fall, and not rise again. ²¹It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will punish on high the host of exalted ones, and on the earth the kings of the earth.”
- **Revelation 20:3** “³and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.”

The wicked are slain, the elements of the earth and the atmosphere are burned up; the planet is a desolate wasteland where Satan is forced to wait during the Judicial Review.

- **Revelation 20:4-5** “⁴And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”

At the Second Coming, only the righteous dead are resurrected. This is the first resurrection and none will die a second time. During the millennium, the righteous are doing the Judicial Review: judging the cases of men and angels, verifying that God is just and that He has been correct all along.

The first resurrection takes place at the Second Coming when the righteous are raised to life. This is the first death for the wicked.

REVELATION 20: After The Millennium

- **Revelation 20:7-8** “⁷Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.”
- **Great Controversy, p. 663** “Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy. While deprived of his power and cut off from his work of deception, the prince of evil was miserable and dejected; but as the wicked dead are raised and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy. He will marshal all the armies of the lost under his banner and through them endeavor to execute his plans. The wicked are Satan’s captives. In rejecting Christ they



have accepted the rule of the rebel leader. They are ready to receive his suggestions and to do his bidding. Yet, true to his early cunning, he does not acknowledge himself to be Satan. He claims to be the prince who is the rightful owner of the world and whose inheritance has been unlawfully wrested from him. He represents himself to his deluded subjects as a redeemer, assuring them that his power has brought them forth from their graves and that he is about to rescue them from the most cruel tyranny. The presence of Christ having been removed, Satan works wonders to support his claims. He makes the weak strong and inspires all with his own spirit and energy. He proposes to lead them against the camp of the saints and to take possession of the City of God. With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead and declares that as their leader he is well able to overthrow the city and regain his throne and his kingdom."

- **Great Controversy, p. 664** "There are kings and generals who conquered nations, valiant men who never lost a battle, proud, ambitious warriors whose approach made kingdoms tremble. In death these experienced no change. As they come up from the grave, they resume the current of their thoughts just where it ceased. They are actuated by the same desire to conquer that ruled them when they fell."

The final battle of the Great Controversy is over before it begins.

REVELATION 20: The Destruction of the Wicked

- **Revelation 20:11-12** "¹¹Then 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. ¹²And 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."
- **Isaiah 28:21** "²¹For the Lord will rise up as at Mount Perazim, he will be angry as in the Valley of Gibeon—that He may do His work, His awesome work, and bring to pass His act, His unusual act.

Not comes the moment when all receive their reward "*according to their works*" as an execution of the investigative judgment made by God and confirmed through the judicial review by the jury.

- **Matthew 25:31-34** "³¹When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. ³³And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'
- **Matthew 25:41** "⁴¹Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:’"
- **Great Controversy, p. 665-666** "Now Christ again appears to the view of His enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray. The glory of the Eternal Father is enshrouding His Son. The brightness of His presence fills the City of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the whole earth with its radiance... In the presence of the assembled inhabitants of earth and heaven the final coronation of the Son of God takes place. And now, invested with supreme majesty and power, the King of kings pronounces sentence upon the rebels against His government and executes justice upon those who have transgressed His law and oppressed His people."

- **Revelation 20:9-10** “⁹They 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. ¹⁰The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.
- **Great Controversy, p. 666** “As soon as the books of record are opened, and the eye of Jesus looks upon the wicked, they are conscious of every sin which they have ever committed. They see just where their feet diverged from the path of purity and holiness, just how far pride and rebellion have carried them in the violation of the law of God. The seductive temptations which they encouraged by indulgence in sin, the blessings perverted, the messengers of God despised, the warnings rejected, the waves of mercy beaten back by the stubborn, unrepentant heart – all appear as if written in letters of fire. Above the throne is revealed the cross; and like a panoramic view appear the scenes of Adam’s temptation and fall, and the successive steps in the great plan of redemption.”
- **Revelation 22:12** “¹²And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”

Everyone's sentence or reward will be equal to their crime. The cookie-thief will not burn as long as the mass-murderer. Each broke the fiery law of God, but if they burned forever and ever, then their reward would not be according to their works.

It would be total injustice for both the cookie thief and the mass murderer to have the same sentence.

The Second Death: The Fate of the Wicked (7 points to debunk the myth)

1. Everlasting Hellfire Debunked: What is everlasting fire?

- **Matthew 25:41** “⁴¹Then 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:”

God is the everlasting fire; it is He that will do the consuming work.

- **Matthew 13:40-43** “⁴⁰As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. ⁴¹The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; ⁴²And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”
 - Hellfire takes place at the end of this world's history. All will be burned up and there cannot be gnashing of teeth for very long because it will burn!

2. Everlasting Hellfire Debunked: Do the wicked burn forever?

- **Malachi 4:1, 3** “¹For, 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... ³And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts.”
- **Ezekiel 28:18b** “¹⁸...I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all...”

The wages of sin is not eternal torment, but rather it is death.

- **II Peter 3:10** “¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”
 - There will be nothing left – it will all be gone.
- **Psalm 68:2** “²As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.”

3. Everlasting Hellfire Debunked: What does it mean when it says “forever?”

- **Revelation 14:10-11** “¹⁰The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: ¹¹And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”
- **Exodus 21:6** “⁶Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.”
 - This servant who wished to stay with his master after he was set free was able to do so. It meant that as long as they were alive, they would serve the master.

The term forever means as long as the earth stands.

4. Everlasting Hellfire Debunked: What is the fate of the wicked according to the Sanctuary?

- **Psalm 73:12-14** “¹²Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. ¹³Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. ¹⁴For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.”
 - King David is lamenting because he sees that all these wicked people are having earthly success and he, who is trying to be righteous, is not.
- **Psalm 73:16-17** “¹⁶When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; ¹⁷Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.”
- **Psalm 37:20** “²⁰But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.”
- **Leviticus 4:12** “¹²Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt.”
- **Leviticus 4:19** “¹⁹And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn it upon the altar.”
 - The wicked will be consumed away into smoke and ashes.

The wicked will not be the ones burning forever and ever.

5. Everlasting Hellfire Debunked: Is there a biblical example of eternal fire?

- **Jude 1:7** “⁷Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”
 - Sodom and Gomorrah are not still burning today – it simply means the fire of God.
 - It is not that the fire will never stop burning, but rather that no one can put it out.
 - It means that it will do its work to completion.

Just like Sodom and Gomorrah, the wicked will be burned with a fire that cannot be put out until it has consumed everything.

6. Everlasting Hellfire Debunked: Are the wicked mortal and subject to death?

- **Romans 6:23** “²³For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
 - The wages of sin is not everlasting torment, but rather it is death.
- **I Timothy 6:16** “¹⁶Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”
 - The wicked are not immortal, but rather they are subject to death like all else.
- **Psalm 145:20** “²⁰The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.”
- **I John 3:15** “¹⁵Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.”
 - The wicked do not possess eternal life, so they cannot live forever

7. Everlasting Hellfire Debunked FINAL POINT: What is the full penalty for sin?

- Did Jesus pay the full penalty for our sins? *Yes, He did.* What would happen if He did not pay the full price for sin? *We would all be lost.* Did Jesus get a discount? *No, He did not.*

If the doctrine of eternal hellfire is true and the full penalty of sin is that you must burn forever and ever, then Jesus never paid the full penalty of sin and we are all lost.

- So, what is the penalty of sin: death or eternal torment? Jesus is not being eternally tormented; therefore it cannot be the penalty for sin. It was death.
- **Great Controversy, p. 674** “The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away. No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin. One reminder alone remains: Our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought.”

THE SECOND DEATH

- **Revelation 20:13-15** “¹³The 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. ¹⁴Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”

There is no one in a place called “hell.” Hell just means grave, death, separation from God. This concept is what was destroyed – no one will ever be separated from God again! Also, the wicked cannot be in “hell” because they are still in the grave and sea and their works could not be the standard of judgment if they had already received their reward at death 1,000 years before!

The wicked would already be paying the penalty for a crime without receiving a trial and a sentencing – that is not the justice of God.

- **Matthew 3:11-12** “¹¹I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His 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.”

God will stretch out His great arms of holy fire and put them around the wicked one last time. In that hug, the wicked will sense, "This is what Heaven is about: perfect love... and it's torturing me. If God had allowed me to enter it would have been eternal torment."

- **The Signs of the Times, April 11, 1895** “Christ alone can bridge the gulf that sin has made between earth and heaven, and make it possible to reach fallen man with the overtures of mercy. But through the merits of Christ, man has been given a second probation, that he may be tested and proved by another trial to see whether he will be obedient to all the commandments of God, and be brought back in freedom from sin, with his loyalty proved, to have a right to the tree of life, and to enter in through the gates into the city. In order that man might be thus privileged, Christ, the divine Son of God, joined himself to human nature, that man might understand that the living true God would have every son and daughter of Adam a partaker of the divine nature through union with himself, and thus manifest to the world, to unfallen worlds, and to the synagogue of Satan, that the redemption of the fallen race is possible.”

Sin No More

- **Nahum 1:9-10** “⁹What do you conspire against the Lord? He will make an utter end of it. Affliction will not rise up a second time. ¹⁰For while tangled like thorns, and while drunken like drunkards, they shall be devoured like stubble fully dried.”

Never again will we have to wake up to another day of temptation. Sin will never again be a burden upon us. We will never have to watch those we love suffer. Our existence will be a passionate love experience with the Creator of the Universe forever and ever.

- **SDA Bible Commentary Vol. 5, p. 1132** “The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels.”
- **Great Controversy, p. 504** “The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. Says the word of God: “Affliction shall not rise up the second time” (*Nahum 1:9*). The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of bondage, will be honored as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom.”
- **Matthew 13:43** “⁴³Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

The Final Page, The Final Point

- **II Peter 1:3-8 (ESV)** “³His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your **faith** with virtue, and **virtue** with knowledge, ⁶and **knowledge** with self-control, and **self-control** with steadfastness, and **steadfastness** with godliness, ⁷and **godliness** with **brotherly affection**, and brotherly affection with **love**. ⁸For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. ¹⁰Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, **FOR IF YOU PRACTICE THESE QUALITIES YOU WILL NEVER FALL.** ¹¹For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

The Alter of Burnt Offering – SURRENDER

- **Revelation 13:8** “⁸And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**”

The Laver or Washbasin – CHANGE

- **Acts 22:16** “¹⁶And now why tarriest thou? arise, and **be baptized, and wash away thy sins**, calling on the name of the Lord”



The Table of Showbread – STUDY

- **Luke 4:4** “⁴And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That **man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God**”

Alter of Incense – PRAY

- **Psalm 141:2** “²Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice”

7-Branch Candlestick or Menorah – SHARE

- **Matthew 5:16** “¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that **they may see your good works,** and glorify your Father which is in heaven”

Ark of the Covenant – LOVE

- **Galatians 5:14** “¹⁴For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

In the Sanctuary pattern, Jesus will help us walk through the steps: Surrender – Change – Study – Pray – Share – Love

- **Romans 13:11-14 (ESV)** “¹¹Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. ¹²The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.”

My friends, put on the armor of God, the armor of light.