



Photo by [Vlad Kutepov](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Last week we discovered that according to the Bible, you and I do not have natural immortality – there is no part of you and me, like a soul, that is eternal. (To read last week’s message, [click here](#).)

The Hebrew word translated as *soul* – used over 750 times in the Old Testament – generally refers to a whole person, fully engaged with living. And the Bible tells us that the soul who sins, will die ([Ezekiel 18:4](#)).

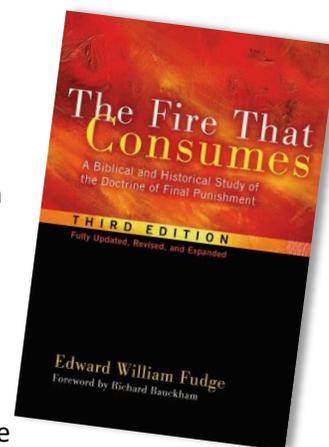
The only One who has immortality – or is eternal – is God. (see [1 Timothy 6:15-16](#) and [Romans 2:7](#)).

We also saw this contrast – which is presented from the beginning of the Bible right through to the end – *death and destruction* is what we have *earned*; eternal life (or immortality) is a gift given to those who are connected to Jesus (see [Genesis 2:15-17](#), [John 3:16](#), and [Romans 6:23](#)).

The overwhelming majority of Biblical passages that speak about the consequence of sin, point to death and eternal destruction.

So how did we end up with the idea that God will keep people alive forever in hell to torment them for their sinful lives?

Again, I would recommend a book titled [The Fire that Consumes](#) (3rd Edition) by Edward W. Fudge. Mr. Fudge is an Evangelical Christian who looks at every passage of Scripture that speaks about the soul, death, and eternal destruction. It is comprehensive and well written. It is a great resource on this topic!



Eternal Hell Fire

We saw last week that Greek Philosophers, around 400 BC, first introduced the idea that a person's soul is immortal and is only temporarily house in a human body for periods of time here on earth. By the time of Christ, it was the commonly held belief among most educated people outside of the conservative Jewish culture. It was even embraced among many progressive Jewish thinkers.

By AD 200 or so, it had crept into the thinking of many Christian communities. Since that time, it has become so engrained in traditional Christian thinking, that up until recently, those who taught otherwise appeared almost un-Christian.

If you believe this, there are a handful of Biblical passages that at first glance seem to support it. And, for many who have grown up believing it, it has not been questioned

The primary Biblical passage that alludes to everlasting punishment is found in Revelation 20. So, let's take a closer look at it.

Revelation 19

For context, we need to look back to [Revelation 19](#). It begins in Heaven as Heavenly beings react to the coming victory over sin. The real action begins in verse 11:

Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and with justice he judges and makes war ... He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. The armies that were in heaven followed him on white horses, wearing pure white linen. ([Revelation 19:11-14](#), CSB)

The Rider here is Jesus – the Word of God. He leaves Heaven headed for this earth. What follows describes the Second Coming and the events surrounding it from God's perspective. It is a look behind the scenes of the same event Paul talked about in his letter to the Thessalonians. There, we see it more from our perspective. Paul wrote:

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. ([1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#), NLT)

Revelation gives us a few more details, especially as they relate to the destruction of evil.

Then I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and against his army. But the beast was taken prisoner, and along with it the false prophet ... Both of them were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns

with sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword that came from the mouth of the rider on the horse. (Revelation 19:19-21, CSB)

In the story line of Revelation, the beast and the false prophet are symbolic. The beast consistently represents a civil government that persecutes God's people. The false prophet represents corrupt, false religion that works in harmony with the beast. These are not specific individuals. So when it talks about them being thrown into the fire, it's telling us the human systems and powers driving Satan's kingdom will be taken down. They're the first to be thrown in the lake of fire.

Revelation 20

As we move into [Revelation 20](#), it tells us what Satan's fate will be:

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven holding the key to the abyss and a great chain in his hand. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the abyss, closed it, and put a seal on it so that he would no longer deceive the nations until the thousand years were completed. After that, he must be released for a short time. (Revelation 20:1-3, CSB)

So, at this point:

- The beast and false prophet – the humans systems that facilitated Satan's agenda – are in the lake of fire.
- Satan is locked up with no one to interact with.
- God's people have been taken from the earth and are on their way up to Heaven
- The people God did not take from the earth – those left behind – are dead.

The scene now shifts back up to Heaven:

Then I saw thrones, and people seated on them who were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and who had not accepted the mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4, CSB)

These are the people described in Thessalonians – *the believers who have died*. Notice their souls were not alive until God made them alive again.

The rest of the dead ...

Those who died at the Second Coming – described above:

The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.

This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:5-6, CSB)

The *first resurrection* refers back to God's people who will reign with Him for a thousand years.

So what is this all about?

The Bible doesn't say much, other than what we just read.

Here's what I think will be happening during that time.

God's people will have access to the records of all the events related to this earth and to Satan and sin. They will have the opportunity to ask questions and to review God's actions.

Even though you trust and love God, you may still have some nagging questions in the back of your mind – like: Why isn't my grandmother here, she seemed so godly? Or why is this notorious criminal here? Questions that have the potential to lead to discontent and future rebellion.

God's transparency will be evident and by the time it's over, there will not be any doubt about anyone's fate. We will be 100% convinced that God has treated everyone with love, mercy, and justice. I believe it is this time spent, that will ensure sin never comes around again.

The passage then goes on to tell us what will happen at the end of the thousand years. This is what Jesus was referring to when He said:

Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God's Son, and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life ...

We saw this happen at the Second Coming.

... and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment." (John 5:28-29, NLT)

This is what is now coming up in narrative – remember where it said a couple of verses ago: *The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed (Rev. 20:5)*. Our attention shifts back down to earth again.

When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations ... to gather them for battle. Their number is like the sand of the sea. They came up across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the encampment of the saints, the beloved city. (Revelation 20:7-8, CSB)

So here's the picture. The great city – the New Jerusalem – is surrounded by this army compared to the number of grains of sand of the sea, and is commanded by Satan himself.

If the city was here in the US, it would cover about half of the continental United States – from here to the east coast and stretching north and south from Mexico to Canada.

Satan's massive army surrounds this city and he makes one last desperate attempt to overthrow God.

Then fire came down from heaven and consumed them. (Revelation 20:9, CSB)

What does it mean to be consumed? This indicates that whatever it was, it is no longer. It's destroyed.

And who would *them* be talking about? The army surrounding the city, led by Satan. They are all burned up.

Then fire came down from heaven and consumed them. The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet are, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Revelation 20:9-10, CSB)

Here we have the lake of fire again. The beast and the false prophet are still there one thousand years later. But remember, they're not individuals, they are symbols of the human organizations that drove Satan's agenda here on earth.

Satan and his army was consumed by the fire that came down from heaven, so what went into the lake of fire? The human agencies that drove sin on earth are in the fire – the visible presence of sin has been effectively terminated. Now, the supernatural agency that drove sin, the power of sin – represented by the devil – is broken.

Let's read on:

Then I saw a great white throne and one seated on it. Earth and heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them. (Revelation 20:11, CSB)

This refers to God.

I also saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened ... Then the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them; each one was judged according to their works. (Revelation 20:12-13, CSB)

Again, this has to be symbolic, since they were already consumed ([verse 9](#)).

Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.

Death and Hades (the grave) are now are thrown in the lake of fire – again, not individuals, but the last piece of sin, it's consequences. Death and Hades are terminated – they are done away with!

*Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. **This is the second death**, the lake of fire. And anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:14-15, CSB – emphasis mine)*

The *lake of fire* is the *second death*.

The *lake of fire* is a word picture intended to create a sense of the horrible way sin would end. It is intended to grab you by the gut and graphically illustrate that the *second death* is not just peacefully dying, but will be a horrific event.

And the fact that it burns forever and ever is simply an exclamation point to say that no part of sin will ever be heard from again. It has been defeated and destroyed!

God wants you and I to know that *sin will be destroyed forever*. And, if you refuse to allow Him to separate sin from your life, you will be destroyed with it.

But God is also fair. He will not torture people for eternity for the relatively short period – in terms of eternity – of rebellion lived out on this earth.

Edward Fudge shares these helpful thoughts:

*The first death is the opposite only of mortal life ... But the second death is opposite of eternal life. It is what must happen when God leaves the finally unrepentant to the evil they have chosen. Without the life which only God can give they perish eternally.*¹

*As there is a second and higher life, so there is also a second and deeper death. And as after that life there is no more death, so after that death, there is no more life.*²

Revelation 21

So, why is this important? Will someone lose their salvation for believing the wrong thing here?

First of all, your salvation is based on your connection to Jesus, not on what you believe about hell.

This is important to remember, because often times we act as though those who see the Bible differently from us are somehow less Christian or even not really Christian at all.

Every follower of Jesus is a brother or sister, not an enemy. Each one is an individual to be loved, not looked down on.

So, is this just fluff?

No, because what we teach about God will make a big difference to those we are trying to reach. It's difficult to paint a true picture of God while teaching that if you don't do what He says, He will keep you alive forever to torture you for your mistakes.

There are more people who have rejected Christianity on this one belief than on anything else.

Then there is the fact that we tend to become like who we worship and admire. If we believe God is harsh and judgmental, we will reflect that in our relationships.

Some of the worst atrocities in the history of this world have been justified through the doctrine of eternal hell fire.

But, here's the most important point. Understanding how things will end for those who are separated from God, makes His Grace all the more powerful.

This horrific picture of the end of sin and unrepentant sinners in [Revelation 20](#), gives way to this beautiful picture in [Revelation 21](#).

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more ...

Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: "Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away." ([Revelation 21:1-4](#), CSB)

This brings us back to the simplicity of the Gospel:

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. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ([John 3:16-17](#), NKJV)

This is the ending God wants for you and me – and for your friends, family, neighbors, random people you meet each day ...

He makes the other ending as clear as possible to help us understand what's at stake.

Which ending are you moving towards?

Notes

Text you find in [this color](#) is a link to more information. It may take you to the Bible verse in context and/or in several different translations utilizing [BibleGateway.com](#). In some cases, it may take you to a website where there is additional information. And, it may take you to a PDF copy of previous sermons in this series.

The Fire that Consumes

One of the **best books written** on the topic of **hell and eternal destruction** is [The Fire that Consumes – 3rd Edition](#), Edward W. Fudge, © 2011, published by Cascade Books. To purchase a hard copy of this book, [click here](#). It's also available as an e-book – for Apple Books, [click here](#); for Kindle Books, [click here](#); or for Nook Books, [click here](#).

Previous Messages in this Series (click on the title to download it)

- May 9, 2020 – *Dead or Alive?* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- May 16, 2020 – *Symptom or Disease?* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- May 30, 2020 – *Out or In?* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- June 6, 2020 – *Starve or Eat?* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- June 13, 2020 – *Atrophy or Exercise?* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- June 20, 2020 – *Just Love?* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- July 4, 2020 – *Am I a Hypocrite?* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- July 11, 2020 – *Burn Out or Rest? – Part 1* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- July 18, 2020 – *Burn Out or Rest? – Part 2* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- Aug. 1, 2020 – *A Look Back* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- Aug. 15, 2020 – *Love Like Jesus!* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- Aug. 22, 2020 – *Distracted or Focused?* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)
- Aug. 29, 2020 – *Mortal or Immortal?* ([click here](#) to watch it on YouTube)

Scripture References

Genesis 2:4-9 (NLT): *This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth.*

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ neither wild plants nor grains were growing on the earth. For the LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. ⁶ Instead, springs came up from the ground and watered all the land. ⁷ Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person.

⁸ Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he placed the man he had made. ⁹ The LORD God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground – trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden he placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:4-9, NLT)

Genesis 2:15-17 (NLT): *The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. ¹⁶ But the LORD God warned him, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden – ¹⁷ except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die."*
(Genesis 2:15-17, NLT)

Genesis 3:1-24 (NLT): *The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"*

² "Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. ³ "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'"

⁴ "You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. ⁵ "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil."

⁶ The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. ⁷ At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

⁸ When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. ⁹ Then the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

¹⁰ He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."

¹¹ "Who told you that you were naked?" the LORD God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?"

¹² The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.”

¹³ Then the LORD God asked the woman, “What have you done?”

“The serpent deceived me,” she replied. “That’s why I ate it.”

¹⁴ Then the LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. ¹⁵ And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

¹⁶ Then he said to the woman,

“I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you.”

¹⁷ And to the man he said,

“Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. ¹⁸ It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return.”

²⁰ Then the man – Adam – named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all who live. ²¹ And the LORD God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.

²² Then the LORD God said, “Look, the human beings have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!” ²³ So the LORD God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. ²⁴ After sending them out, the LORD God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. (**Genesis 3:1-24**, NLT)

Genesis 7:17-22 (CSB): The flood continued for forty days on the earth; the water increased and lifted up the ark so that it rose above the earth. ¹⁸ The water surged and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. ¹⁹ Then the water surged even higher on the earth, and all the high mountains under the whole sky were covered. ²⁰ The mountains were covered as the water surged above them more than twenty feet. ²¹ Every creature perished—those that crawl on the earth, birds, livestock, wildlife, and those that swarm on the earth, as well as all mankind. ²² Everything with the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils – everything on dry land died. (**Genesis 7:17-22**, CSB)

Psalms 139 (NLT): O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. ² You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I’m far away. ³ You see me when

I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. ⁴You know what I am going to say even before I say it, LORD. ⁵You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand!

⁷I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! ⁸If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. ⁹If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, ¹⁰even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me. ¹¹I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night – ¹²but even in darkness I cannot hide from you. To you the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are the same to you.

¹³You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous – how well I know it. ¹⁵You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. ¹⁶You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

¹⁷How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! ¹⁸I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me!

¹⁹O God, if only you would destroy the wicked! Get out of my life, you murderers! ²⁰They blaspheme you; your enemies misuse your name. ²¹O LORD, shouldn't I hate those who hate you? Shouldn't I despise those who oppose you? ²²Yes, I hate them with total hatred, for your enemies are my enemies.

²³Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. ²⁴Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

(Psalm 139, NLT)

Proverbs 3:5-12 (NIV): *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;*

⁶in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

⁷Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. ⁸This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

⁹Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; ¹⁰then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

¹¹My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline, and do not resent his rebuke, ¹²because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in. (Proverbs 3:5-12, NIV)

Ecclesiastes 9:3-10 (NLT): *It seems so wrong that everyone under the sun suffers the same fate.*

Already twisted by evil, people choose their own mad course, for they have no hope. There is nothing ahead but death anyway. ⁴There is hope only for the living. As they say, "It's better to be a live dog than a dead lion!"

⁵ *The living at least know they will die, but the dead know nothing. They have no further reward, nor are they remembered.* ⁶ *Whatever they did in their lifetime – loving, hating, envying – is all long gone. They no longer play a part in anything here on earth.* ⁷ *So go ahead. Eat your food with joy, and drink your wine with a happy heart, for God approves of this!* ⁸ *Wear fine clothes, with a splash of cologne!*

⁹ *Live happily with the woman you love through all the meaningless days of life that God has given you under the sun. The wife God gives you is your reward for all your earthly toil.* ¹⁰ *Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave, there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom. (Ecclesiastes 9:3-10, NLT)*

Ecclesiastes 12:6-7 (NLT): *Yes, remember your Creator now while you are young, before the silver cord of life snaps and the golden bowl is broken. Don't wait until the water jar is smashed at the spring and the pulley is broken at the well.* ⁷ *For then the dust will return to the earth, and the spirit will return to God who gave it. (Ecclesiastes 12:6-7, NLT)*

Isaiah 14:1-23 (NLT): *But the LORD will have mercy on the descendants of Jacob. He will choose Israel as his special people once again. He will bring them back to settle once again in their own land. And people from many different nations will come and join them there and unite with the people of Israel.* ² *The nations of the world will help the people of Israel to return, and those who come to live in the LORD's land will serve them. Those who captured Israel will themselves be captured, and Israel will rule over its enemies.*

³ *In that wonderful day when the LORD gives his people rest from sorrow and fear, from slavery and chains,* ⁴ *you will taunt the king of Babylon. You will say,*

"The mighty man has been destroyed. Yes, your insolence is ended. ⁵ *For the LORD has crushed your wicked power and broken your evil rule.* ⁶ *You struck the people with endless blows of rage and held the nations in your angry grip with unrelenting tyranny.* ⁷ *But finally the earth is at rest and quiet. Now it can sing again!* ⁸ *Even the trees of the forest – the cypress trees and the cedars of Lebanon – sing out this joyous song: 'Since you have been cut down, no one will come now to cut us down!'*

⁹ *"In the place of the dead there is excitement over your arrival. The spirits of world leaders and mighty kings long dead stand up to see you.* ¹⁰ *With one voice they all cry out, 'Now you are as weak as we are!'* ¹¹ *Your might and power were buried with you. The sound of the harp in your palace has ceased. Now maggots are your sheet, and worms your blanket.'*

¹² *"How you are fallen from heaven, O shining star, son of the morning! You have been thrown down to the earth, you who destroyed the nations of the world.* ¹³ *For you said to yourself, 'I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God's stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north.* ¹⁴ *I will climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High.'* ¹⁵ *Instead, you will be brought down to the place of the dead, down to its lowest depths.* ¹⁶ *Everyone there will stare at you and ask, 'Can this be the one who shook the*

earth and made the kingdoms of the world tremble?¹⁷ Is this the one who destroyed the world and made it into a wasteland? Is this the king who demolished the world's greatest cities and had no mercy on his prisoners?'

¹⁸ "The kings of the nations lie in stately glory, each in his own tomb,¹⁹ but you will be thrown out of your grave like a worthless branch. Like a corpse trampled underfoot, you will be dumped into a mass grave with those killed in battle. You will descend to the pit.²⁰ You will not be given a proper burial, for you have destroyed your nation and slaughtered your people. The descendants of such an evil person will never again receive honor.²¹ Kill this man's children! Let them die because of their father's sins! They must not rise and conquer the earth, filling the world with their cities."

²² This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says:

"I, myself, have risen against Babylon! I will destroy its children and its children's children," says the LORD.²³ "I will make Babylon a desolate place of owls, filled with swamps and marshes. I will sweep the land with the broom of destruction. I, the LORD of Heaven's Armies, have spoken!" (Isaiah 14:1-23, NLT)

Isaiah 25:1-9 (NLT): O LORD, I will honor and praise your name, for you are my God. You do such wonderful things! You planned them long ago, and now you have accomplished them.² You turn mighty cities into heaps of ruins. Cities with strong walls are turned to rubble. Beautiful palaces in distant lands disappear and will never be rebuilt.³ Therefore, strong nations will declare your glory; ruthless nations will fear you.

⁴ But you are a tower of refuge to the poor, O LORD, a tower of refuge to the needy in distress. You are a refuge from the storm and a shelter from the heat. For the oppressive acts of ruthless people are like a storm beating against a wall,⁵ or like the relentless heat of the desert. But you silence the roar of foreign nations. As the shade of a cloud cools relentless heat, so the boastful songs of ruthless people are stilled.

⁶ In Jerusalem, the LORD of Heaven's Armies will spread a wonderful feast for all the people of the world. It will be a delicious banquet with clear, well-aged wine and choice meat.⁷ There he will remove the cloud of gloom, the shadow of death that hangs over the earth.⁸ He will swallow up death forever! The Sovereign LORD will wipe away all tears. He will remove forever all insults and mockery against his land and people. The LORD has spoken!

⁹ In that day the people will proclaim, "This is our God! We trusted in him, and he saved us! This is the LORD, in whom we trusted. Let us rejoice in the salvation he brings!" (Isaiah 25:1-9, NLT)

Isaiah 66 (NLT): This is what the LORD says:

"Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Could you build me a temple as good as that? Could you build me such a resting place?² My hands have made both heaven and earth; they and everything in them are mine. I, the LORD, have spoken!

"I will bless those who have humble and contrite hearts, who tremble at my word. ³ But those who choose their own ways – delighting in their detestable sins – will not have their offerings accepted. When such people sacrifice a bull, it is no more acceptable than a human sacrifice. When they sacrifice a lamb, it's as though they had sacrificed a dog! When they bring an offering of grain, they might as well offer the blood of a pig. When they burn frankincense, it's as if they had blessed an idol. ⁴ I will send them great trouble – all the things they feared. For when I called, they did not answer. When I spoke, they did not listen. They deliberately sinned before my very eyes and chose to do what they know I despise."

⁵ Hear this message from the LORD, all you who tremble at his words: "Your own people hate you and throw you out for being loyal to my name. 'Let the LORD be honored!' they scoff. 'Be joyful in him!' But they will be put to shame. ⁶ What is all the commotion in the city? What is that terrible noise from the Temple? It is the voice of the LORD taking vengeance against his enemies.

⁷ "Before the birth pains even begin, Jerusalem gives birth to a son. ⁸ Who has ever seen anything as strange as this? Who ever heard of such a thing? Has a nation ever been born in a single day? Has a country ever come forth in a mere moment? But by the time Jerusalem's birth pains begin, her children will be born. ⁹ Would I ever bring this nation to the point of birth and then not deliver it?" asks the LORD. "No! I would never keep this nation from being born," says your God.

¹⁰ "Rejoice with Jerusalem! Be glad with her, all you who love her and all you who mourn for her.

¹¹ Drink deeply of her glory even as an infant drinks at its mother's comforting breasts."

¹² This is what the LORD says: "I will give Jerusalem a river of peace and prosperity. The wealth of the nations will flow to her. Her children will be nursed at her breasts, carried in her arms, and held on her lap. ¹³ I will comfort you there in Jerusalem as a mother comforts her child."

¹⁴ When you see these things, your heart will rejoice. You will flourish like the grass! Everyone will see the LORD's hand of blessing on his servants – and his anger against his enemies. ¹⁵ See, the LORD is coming with fire, and his swift chariots roar like a whirlwind. He will bring punishment with the fury of his anger and the flaming fire of his hot rebuke. ¹⁶ The LORD will punish the world by fire and by his sword. He will judge the earth, and many will be killed by him.

¹⁷ "Those who 'consecrate' and 'purify' themselves in a sacred garden with its idol in the center— feasting on pork and rats and other detestable meats – will come to a terrible end," says the LORD.

¹⁸ "I can see what they are doing, and I know what they are thinking. So I will gather all nations and peoples together, and they will see my glory. ¹⁹ I will perform a sign among them. And I will send those who survive to be messengers to the nations – to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians (who are famous as archers), to Tubal and Greece, and to all the lands beyond the sea that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. There they will declare my glory to the nations. ²⁰ They will bring the remnant of your people back from every nation. They will bring them to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the LORD. They will ride on horses, in

chariots and wagons, and on mules and camels,” says the LORD. ²¹ “And I will appoint some of them to be my priests and Levites. I, the LORD, have spoken!

²² “As surely as my new heavens and earth will remain, so will you always be my people, with a name that will never disappear,” says the LORD. ²³ “All humanity will come to worship me from week to week and from month to month.

²⁴ *And as they go out, they will see the dead bodies of those who have rebelled against me. For the worms that devour them will never die, and the fire that burns them will never go out. All who pass by will view them with utter horror.”*

(Isaiah 66, NLT)

Jeremiah 4:1-6 (NLT): “O Israel,” says the LORD, “if you wanted to return to me, you could. You could throw away your detestable idols and stray away no more. ² Then when you swear by my name, saying, ‘As surely as the LORD lives,’ you could do so with truth, justice, and righteousness. Then you would be a blessing to the nations of the world, and all people would come and praise my name.”

³ This is what the LORD says to the people of Judah and Jerusalem:

“Plow up the hard ground of your hearts! Do not waste your good seed among thorns. ⁴ O people of Judah and Jerusalem, surrender your pride and power. Change your hearts before the LORD, or my anger will burn like an unquenchable fire because of all your sins.

⁵ “Shout to Judah, and broadcast to Jerusalem! Tell them to sound the alarm throughout the land: ‘Run for your lives! Flee to the fortified cities!’ ⁶ Raise a signal flag as a warning for Jerusalem: ‘Flee now! Do not delay!’ For I am bringing terrible destruction upon you from the north.” (Jeremiah 4:1-6, NLT)

Jeremiah 7:16-20 (NLT): “Pray no more for these people, Jeremiah. Do not weep or pray for them, and don’t beg me to help them, for I will not listen to you. ¹⁷ Don’t you see what they are doing throughout the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁸ No wonder I am so angry! Watch how the children gather wood and the fathers build sacrificial fires. See how the women knead dough and make cakes to offer to the Queen of Heaven. And they pour out liquid offerings to their other idol gods! ¹⁹ Am I the one they are hurting?” asks the LORD. “Most of all, they hurt themselves, to their own shame.”

²⁰ *So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “I will pour out my terrible fury on this place. Its people, animals, trees, and crops will be consumed by the unquenchable fire of my anger.”*

(Jeremiah 7:16-20, NLT)

Jeremiah 17:19-27 (CSB): This is what the LORD said to me: “Go and stand at the Gate of the People, through which the kings of Judah go in and out; stand also at all the other gates of Jerusalem. ²⁰ Say to them, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, you kings of Judah and all people of Judah and everyone living in Jerusalem who come through these gates.

²¹ This is what the LORD says: Be careful not to carry a load on the Sabbath day or bring it through the gates of Jerusalem. ²² Do not bring a load out of your houses or do any work on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your ancestors. ²³ Yet they did not listen or pay attention; they were stiff-necked and would not listen or respond to discipline.

²⁴ But if you are careful to obey me, declares the LORD, and bring no load through the gates of this city on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work on it, ²⁵ then kings who sit on David's throne will come through the gates of this city with their officials. They and their officials will come riding in chariots and on horses, accompanied by the men of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited forever. ²⁶ People will come from the towns of Judah and the villages around Jerusalem, from the territory of Benjamin and the western foothills, from the hill country and the Negev, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and incense, and bringing thank offerings to the house of the LORD.

²⁷ But if you do not obey me to keep the Sabbath day holy by not carrying any load as you come through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, *then I will kindle an unquenchable fire in the gates of Jerusalem that will consume her fortresses.*” (Jeremiah 17:19-27, CSB)

Ezekiel 18:1-4 (NLT): Then another message came to me from the LORD: ² “Why do you quote this proverb concerning the land of Israel: ‘The parents have eaten sour grapes, but their children’s mouths pucker at the taste’? ³ As surely as I live, says the Sovereign LORD, you will not quote this proverb anymore in Israel. ⁴ For all people are mine to judge – both parents and children alike. And this is my rule: *The person [soul] who sins is the one who will die.*” (Ezekiel 18:1-4, NLT)

Ezekiel 18:19-22 (NLT): “‘What?’ you ask. ‘Doesn’t the child pay for the parent’s sins?’ No! For if the child does what is just and right and keeps my decrees, that child will surely live. ²⁰ *The person [soul] who sins is the one who will die. The child will not be punished for the parent’s sins, and the parent will not be punished for the child’s sins. Righteous people will be rewarded for their own righteous behavior, and wicked people will be punished for their own wickedness.* ²¹ But if wicked people turn away from all their sins and begin to obey my decrees and do what is just and right, they will surely live and not die. ²² All their past sins will be forgotten, and they will live because of the righteous things they have done.” (Ezekiel 18:19-22, NLT)

Ezekiel 28:1-19 (NLT): Then this message came to me from the LORD: ² “Son of man, give the prince of Tyre this message from the Sovereign LORD:

“In your great pride you claim, ‘I am a god! I sit on a divine throne in the heart of the sea.’ But you are only a man and not a god, though you boast that you are a god. ³ You regard yourself as wiser than Daniel and think no secret is hidden from you. ⁴ With your wisdom and understanding you have amassed great wealth – gold and silver for your treasuries. ⁵ Yes, your wisdom has made you very rich, and your riches have made you very proud.

⁶ “Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because you think you are as wise as a god, ⁷ I will now bring against you a foreign army, the terror of the nations. They will draw their swords against your marvelous wisdom and defile your splendor! ⁸ They will bring you down to the pit, and you will die in the heart of the sea, pierced with many wounds. ⁹ Will you then boast, ‘I am a god!’ to those who kill you? To them you will be no god but merely a man! ¹⁰ You will die like an outcast at the hands of foreigners. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!”

¹¹ Then this further message came to me from the LORD: ¹² “Son of man, sing this funeral song for the king of Tyre. Give him this message from the Sovereign LORD:

“You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and exquisite in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God. Your clothing was adorned with every precious stone – red carnelian, pale-green peridot, white moonstone, blue-green beryl, onyx, green jasper, blue lapis lazuli, turquoise, and emerald – all beautifully crafted for you and set in the finest gold. They were given to you on the day you were created. ¹⁴ I ordained and anointed you as the mighty angelic guardian. You had access to the holy mountain of God and walked among the stones of fire.

¹⁵ “You were blameless in all you did from the day you were created until the day evil was found in you. ¹⁶ Your rich commerce led you to violence, and you sinned. So I banished you in disgrace from the mountain of God. I expelled you, O mighty guardian, from your place among the stones of fire. ¹⁷ Your heart was filled with pride because of all your beauty. Your wisdom was corrupted by your love of splendor. So I threw you to the ground and exposed you to the curious gaze of kings. ¹⁸ You defiled your sanctuaries with your many sins and your dishonest trade. So I brought fire out from within you, and it consumed you. I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching. ¹⁹ All who knew you are appalled at your fate. You have come to a terrible end, and you will exist no more.”

(Ezekiel 28:1-19, NLT)

Matthew 3:7-12 (NIV): *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.*

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” **(Matthew 3:7-12, NIV)**

Matthew 10:28-30 (NLT): *“Don’t be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”*²⁹ *What is the price of two sparrows – one copper coin? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it.*³⁰ *And the very hairs on your head are all numbered.”* (Matthew 10:28-30, NLT)

Matthew 18:7-10 (NLT): *“What sorrow awaits the world, because it tempts people to sin. Temptations are inevitable, but what sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting.”*⁸ *So if your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It’s better to enter eternal life with only one hand or one foot than to be thrown into eternal fire with both of your hands and feet.*⁹ *And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It’s better to enter eternal life with only one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.*

¹⁰ *“Beware that you don’t look down on any of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels are always in the presence of my heavenly Father.”* (Matthew 18:7-12, NLT)

Matthew 25:31-46 (NLT): *“But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne.”*³² *All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”*³³ *He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left.*

³⁴ *“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.”*³⁵ *For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home.”*³⁶ *I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’*

³⁷ *“Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink?’”*³⁸ *Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing?’”*³⁹ *When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’*

⁴⁰ *“And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’*

⁴¹ *“Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, ‘Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons.”*⁴² *For I was hungry, and you didn’t feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn’t give me a drink.”*⁴³ *I was a stranger, and you didn’t invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn’t give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t visit me.’*

⁴⁴ *“Then they will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?’*

⁴⁵ *“And he will answer, ‘I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.’*

⁴⁶ *“And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.”*
(Matthew 25:31-46, NLT)

Mark 9:38-49 (NLT): John said to Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone using your name to cast out demons, but we told him to stop because he wasn’t in our group.”

³⁹ “Don’t stop him!” Jesus said. “No one who performs a miracle in my name will soon be able to speak evil of me. ⁴⁰ Anyone who is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ If anyone gives you even a cup of water because you belong to the Messiah, I tell you the truth, that person will surely be rewarded.

⁴² “But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone hung around your neck. ⁴³ If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It’s better to enter eternal life with only one hand than to go into the unquenchable fires of hell with two hands. ⁴⁵ If your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It’s better to enter eternal life with only one foot than to be thrown into hell with two feet. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out. It’s better to enter the Kingdom of God with only one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ ‘where the maggots never die and the fire never goes out.’

⁴⁹ “For everyone will be tested with fire.” (Mark 9:38-49, NLT)

Luke 3:15-17 (NIV): The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. ¹⁶ John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Luke 3:15-17, NIV)

Luke 12:4-5 (NLT): “Dear friends, don’t be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot do any more to you after that. ⁵ But I’ll tell you whom to fear. Fear God, who has the power to kill you and then throw you into hell. Yes, he’s the one to fear.” (Luke 12:4-5, NLT)

John 3:14-17 (NLT): And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.

¹⁶ “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:14-17, NLT)

John 3:31-36 (NLT): “He has come from above and is greater than anyone else. We are of the earth, and we speak of earthly things, but he has come from heaven and is greater than anyone else. ³² He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but how few believe what he tells them! ³³ Anyone who accepts his testimony can affirm that God is true. ³⁴ For he is sent by God. He speaks God’s words, for God gives him the Spirit without limit. ³⁵ The Father loves his Son and

has put everything into his hands.³⁶ And anyone who believes in God's Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn't obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God's angry judgment." (John 3:31-36, NLT)

John 5:19-30 (NLT): So Jesus explained, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does.²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. In fact, the Father will show him how to do even greater works than healing this man. Then you will truly be astonished.²¹ For just as the Father gives life to those he raises from the dead, so the Son gives life to anyone he wants.²² In addition, the Father judges no one. Instead, he has given the Son absolute authority to judge,²³ so that everyone will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son is certainly not honoring the Father who sent him.

²⁴ "I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.

²⁵ "And I assure you that the time is coming, indeed it's here now, when the dead will hear my voice – the voice of the Son of God. And those who listen will live.²⁶ The Father has life in himself, and he has granted that same life-giving power to his Son.²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge everyone because he is the Son of Man.²⁸ Don't be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God's Son,²⁹ and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment.³⁰ I can do nothing on my own. I judge as God tells me. Therefore, my judgment is just, because I carry out the will of the one who sent me, not my own will." (John 5:19-30, NLT)

John 8:42-47 (NLT): Jesus told them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, because I have come to you from God. I am not here on my own, but he sent me.⁴³ Why can't you understand what I am saying? It's because you can't even hear me!⁴⁴ For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.⁴⁵ So when I tell the truth, you just naturally don't believe me!⁴⁶ Which of you can truthfully accuse me of sin? And since I am telling you the truth, why don't you believe me?⁴⁷ Anyone who belongs to God listens gladly to the words of God. But you don't listen because you don't belong to God." (John 8:42-47, NLT)

Romans 2:5-16 (NLT): But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.⁶ He will judge everyone according to what they have done.⁷ He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that God offers.⁸ But he will pour out his anger and wrath on those who live for

themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness.⁹ There will be trouble and calamity for everyone who keeps on doing what is evil – for the Jew first and also for the Gentile.¹⁰ But there will be glory and honor and peace from God for all who do good – for the Jew first and also for the Gentile.¹¹ For God does not show favoritism.

¹² When the Gentiles sin, they will be destroyed, even though they never had God's written law. And the Jews, who do have God's law, will be judged by that law when they fail to obey it.¹³ For merely listening to the law doesn't make us right with God. It is obeying the law that makes us right in his sight.¹⁴ Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it.¹⁵ They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.¹⁶ And this is the message I proclaim – that the day is coming when God, through Christ Jesus, will judge everyone's secret life. ([Romans 2:5-16](#), NLT)

Romans 5:18-21 (NLT): Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone.¹⁹ Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous.

²⁰ God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant.²¹ So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. ([Romans 5:18-21](#), NLT)

Romans 6:20-23 (NLT): When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the obligation to do right.²¹ And what was the result? You are now ashamed of the things you used to do, things that end in eternal doom.²² But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life.²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. ([Romans 6:20-23](#), NLT)

Romans 12:1-2 (NLT): And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. ([Romans 12:1-2](#), NLT)

1 Corinthians 15:21-28 (NLT): So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man.²² Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life.²³ But there is an order

to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.

²⁴ After that the end will come, when he will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having destroyed every ruler and authority and power. ²⁵ For Christ must reign until he humbles all his enemies beneath his feet. ²⁶ And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For the Scriptures say, “God has put all things under his authority.” (Of course, when it says “all things are under his authority,” that does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.) ²⁸ Then, when all things are under his authority, the Son will put himself under God’s authority, so that God, who gave his Son authority over all things, will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere. (1 Corinthians 15:21-28, NLT)

1 Corinthians 15:51-58 (CSB): Listen, I am telling you a mystery: We will not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible body must be clothed with incorruptibility, and this mortal body must be clothed with immortality. ⁵⁴ When this corruptible body is clothed with incorruptibility, and this mortal body is clothed with immortality, then the saying that is written will take place:

Death has been swallowed up in victory. (Isaiah 25:8) ⁵⁵ Where, death, is your victory? Where, death, is your sting? (Hosea 13:14)

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord’s work, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

(1 Corinthians 15:51-58, CSB)

Galatians 6:7-10 (NLT): Don’t be misled – you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. ⁸ Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. ⁹ So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone – especially to those in the family of faith. (Galatians 6:7-10, NLT)

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NLT): And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.

¹⁵ We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God.

First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. ¹⁷ Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ So encourage each other with these words.

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, NLT)

2 Thessalonians 1:3-10 (NLT): *Dear brothers and sisters, we can't help but thank God for you, because your faith is flourishing and your love for one another is growing. ⁴ We proudly tell God's other churches about your endurance and faithfulness in all the persecutions and hardships you are suffering. ⁵ And God will use this persecution to show his justice and to make you worthy of his Kingdom, for which you are suffering. ⁶ In his justice he will pay back those who persecute you.*

⁷ And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power. ¹⁰ When he comes on that day, he will receive glory from his holy people – praise from all who believe. And this includes you, for you believed what we told you about him.

(2 Thessalonians 1:3-10, NLT)

1 Timothy 6:11-16 (CSB): *But you, man of God, flee from these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of eternal life to which you were called and about which you have made a good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ In the presence of God, who gives life to all, and of Christ Jesus, who gave a good confession before Pontius Pilate, I charge you ¹⁴ to keep this command without fault or failure until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ God will bring this about in his own time. He is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see, to him be honor and eternal power. Amen. (1 Timothy 6:11-16, CSB)*

2 Timothy 1:8-11 (NLT): *So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, either, even though I'm in prison for him. With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News. ⁹ For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time – to show us his grace through Christ Jesus. ¹⁰ And now he has made all of this plain to us by the appearing of Christ Jesus, our Savior. He broke the power of death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the Good News. ¹¹ And God chose me to be a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of this Good News. (2 Timothy 1:8-11, NLT)*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT): *All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to*

do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

(2 Timothy 3:16-17, NLT)

2 Peter 2:1-11 (NLT): *But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way, they will bring sudden destruction on themselves. ² Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. ³ In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money. But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed.*

⁴ For God did not spare even the angels who sinned. He threw them into hell, in gloomy pits of darkness, where they are being held until the day of judgment. ⁵ And God did not spare the ancient world – except for Noah and the seven others in his family. Noah warned the world of God’s righteous judgment. So God protected Noah when he destroyed the world of ungodly people with a vast flood. ⁶ Later, God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and turned them into heaps of ashes. He made them an example of what will happen to ungodly people. ⁷ But God also rescued Lot out of Sodom because he was a righteous man who was sick of the shameful immorality of the wicked people around him. ⁸ Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day. ⁹ So you see, the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials, even while keeping the wicked under punishment until the day of final judgment. ¹⁰ He is especially hard on those who follow their own twisted sexual desire, and who despise authority.

These people are proud and arrogant, daring even to scoff at supernatural beings without so much as trembling. ¹¹ But the angels, who are far greater in power and strength, do not dare to bring from the Lord a charge of blasphemy against those supernatural beings.

(2 Peter 2:1-11, NLT)

1 John 3:7-10 (NLT): *Dear children, don’t let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous. ⁸ But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ Those who have been born into God’s family do not make a practice of sinning, because God’s life is in them. So they can’t keep on sinning, because they are children of God. ¹⁰ So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God. (1 John 3:7-10, NLT)*

1 John 4:7-20 (NLT): *Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. ⁸ But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

⁹ God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. ¹⁰ This is real love – not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

¹¹ Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. ¹² No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.

¹³ And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us. ¹⁴ Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ All who declare that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God. ¹⁶ We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love.

God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. ¹⁷ And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world.

¹⁸ Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love. ¹⁹ We love each other because he loved us first.

²⁰ If someone says, “I love God,” but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don’t love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see? (**1 John 4:7-20**, NLT)

1 John 5:11-13 (NLT): And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God’s Son does not have life.

¹³ I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life. (**1 John 5:11-13**, NLT)

Jude 1:3-16 (NLT): Dear friends, I had been eagerly planning to write to you about the salvation we all share. But now I find that I must write about something else, urging you to defend the faith that God has entrusted once for all time to his holy people. ⁴ I say this because some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God’s marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives. The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

⁵ So I want to remind you, though you already know these things, that Jesus first rescued the nation of Israel from Egypt, but later he destroyed those who did not remain faithful. ⁶ And I remind you of the angels who did not stay within the limits of authority God gave them but left the place where they belonged. God has kept them securely chained in prisons of darkness, waiting for the great day of judgment. ⁷ And don’t forget Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring towns, which were filled with immorality and every kind of sexual perversion. Those cities were destroyed by fire and serve as a warning of the eternal fire of God’s judgment. (**Jude 1:3-7**, NLT)

Revelation 12:1-9 (CSB): *A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. ² She was pregnant and cried out in labor and agony as she was about to give birth. ³ Then another sign appeared in heaven: There was a great fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads were seven crowns ⁴ Its tail swept away a third of the stars in heaven and hurled them to the earth. And the dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she did give birth it might devour her child. ⁵ She gave birth to a Son, a male who is going to rule all nations with an iron rod. Her child was caught up to God and to his throne. ⁶ The woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, to be nourished there for 1,260 days.*

⁷ Then war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels also fought, ⁸ but he could not prevail, and there was no place for them in heaven any longer. ⁹ So the great dragon was thrown out – the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the one who deceives the whole world. He was thrown to earth, and his angels with him. (Revelation 12:1-9, CSB)

Revelation 19 – 22 (CSB): *After this I heard something like the loud voice of a vast multitude in heaven, saying,*

Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God, ² because his judgments are true and righteous, because he has judged the notorious prostitute who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality; and he has avenged the blood of his servants that was on her hands.

³ A second time they said,

Hallelujah! Her smoke ascends forever and ever!

⁴ Then the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who is seated on the throne, saying,

Amen! Hallelujah!

⁵ A voice came from the throne, saying,

Praise our God, all his servants, and the ones who fear him, both small and great!

⁶ Then I heard something like the voice of a vast multitude, like the sound of cascading waters, and like the rumbling of loud thunder, saying,

Hallelujah, because our Lord God, the Almighty, reigns! ⁷ Let us be glad, rejoice, and give him glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has prepared herself. ⁸ She was given fine linen to wear, bright and pure.

For the fine linen represents the righteous acts of the saints.

⁹ Then he said to me, "Write: Blessed are those invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb!" He also said to me, "These words of God are true." ¹⁰ Then I fell at his feet to worship him, but he

said to me, "Don't do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers and sisters who hold firmly to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God, because the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The Rider on a White Horse

¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and with justice he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a fiery flame, and many crowns were on his head. He had a name written that no one knows except himself. ¹³ He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies that were in heaven followed him on white horses, wearing pure white linen. ¹⁵ A sharp sword came from his mouth, so that he might strike the nations with it. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will also trample the winepress of the fierce anger of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶ And he has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

The Beast and Its Armies Defeated

¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he called out in a loud voice, saying to all the birds flying high overhead, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God, ¹⁸ so that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of military commanders, the flesh of the mighty, the flesh of horses and of their riders, and the flesh of everyone, both free and slave, small and great."

¹⁹ Then I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and against his army. ²⁰ But the beast was taken prisoner, and along with it the false prophet, who had performed the signs in its presence. He deceived those who accepted the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image with these signs. Both of them were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. ²¹ The rest were killed with the sword that came from the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds ate their fill of their flesh.

Satan Bound

20 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven holding the key to the abyss and a great chain in his hand. ² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³ He threw him into the abyss, closed it, and put a seal on it so that he would no longer deceive the nations until the thousand years were completed. After that, he must be released for a short time.

The Saints Reign with Christ

⁴ Then I saw thrones, and people seated on them who were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and who had not accepted the mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a

thousand years. ⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.

This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

Satanic Rebellion Crushed

⁷ When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle. Their number is like the sand of the sea. ⁹ They came up across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the encampment of the saints, the beloved city. Then fire came down from heaven and consumed them. ¹⁰ The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet are, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The Great White Throne Judgment

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and one seated on it. Earth and heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them. ¹² I also saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged according to their works by what was written in the books. ¹³ Then the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them; each one was judged according to their works. ¹⁴ Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

The New Creation

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.

³ Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.

⁵ Then the one seated on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new." He also said, "Write, because these words are faithful and true." ⁶ Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will freely give to the thirsty from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. ⁸ But the cowards, faithless, detestable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers,

idolaters, and all liars – their share will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

The New Jerusalem

⁹ Then one of the seven angels, who had held the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me: “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰ He then carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹ arrayed with God’s glory. Her radiance was like a precious jewel, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. ¹² The city had a massive high wall, with twelve gates. Twelve angels were at the gates; the names of the twelve tribes of Israel’s sons were inscribed on the gates. ¹³ There were three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. ¹⁴ The city wall had twelve foundations, and the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb were on the foundations.

¹⁵ The one who spoke with me had a golden measuring rod to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. ¹⁶ The city is laid out in a square; its length and width are the same. He measured the city with the rod at 12,000 stadia (about 1,400 miles). Its length, width, and height are equal. ¹⁷ Then he measured its wall, 144 cubits (about 72 yards) according to human measurement, which the angel used. ¹⁸ The building material of its wall was jasper, and the city was pure gold clear as glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the city wall were adorned with every kind of jewel: the first foundation is jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰ the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. ²¹ The twelve gates are twelve pearls; each individual gate was made of a single pearl. The main street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass.

²² I did not see a temple in it, because the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. ²⁵ Its gates will never close by day because it will never be night there. ²⁶ They will bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. ²⁷ Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those written in the Lamb’s book of life.

The Source of Life

22 Then he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the city’s main street. The tree of life was on each side of the river, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for healing the nations, ³ and there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name

will be on their foreheads. ⁵ Night will be no more; people will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, because the Lord God will give them light, and they will reign forever and ever.

The Time Is Near

⁶ Then he said to me, “These words are faithful and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.”

⁷ “Look, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

⁸ I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had shown them to me. ⁹ But he said to me, “Don’t do that! I am a fellow servant with you, your brothers the prophets, and those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!”

¹⁰ Then he said to me, “Don’t seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near. ¹¹ Let the unrighteous go on in unrighteousness; let the filthy still be filthy; let the righteous go on in righteousness; let the holy still be holy.”

¹² “Look, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me to repay each person according to his work. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

¹⁴ “Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶ “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to attest these things to you for the churches. I am the Root and descendant of David, the bright morning star.”

¹⁷ Both the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” Let anyone who hears, say, “Come!” Let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who desires take the water of life freely.

¹⁸ I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share of the tree of life and the holy city, which are written about in this book.

²⁰ He who testifies about these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.”

Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with everyone. Amen. ([Revelation 19 – 22](#), CSB)