

Top 10 Lies

you believe!



Top 10 Lies You Believe

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Lie – Global suffering proves there is no God.

This is one of the greatest lies in history. Some even go beyond this and say that if God exists, He must be evil to allow all this suffering. While suffering is a cause of great perplexity to many, there are good reasons for suffering. Common sense alone should tell us that suffering at times serves a good purpose. Most of us recognize that spoiled children are often less sympathetic than those who have suffered difficult lives because they cannot relate, so clearly, even the most hardened skeptic should be able to see that suffering serves some good.

From a parental viewpoint, most understand that, while suffering is not ideal, it is sometimes necessary. If children refuse to obey, they may need to be disciplined, which involves suffering. Parents recognize that this is not done out of hate, but out of love, to help the child. If we understand this, why is it so hard to understand that God, at times, must allow humans to suffer, out of love, to make us better people?

The idea that a God of love is inconsistent with suffering is about as crazy as the idea that a loving parent is inconsistent with punishment. On the contrary! I would contest that those parents who refuse to punish their children do not really and truly love them as they should but refuse to punish out of selfishness, more concerned about the child's attitude towards them. God loves us; therefore, God must punish us. The Bible says, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten" (Rev. 3:19).

The bigger problem is that most people do not realize the true nature of sin. The Bible says, "There is

a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Prov. 14:12). This is speaking of eternal death. God has given us this one lifetime to turn to Him, so He can give us the power to overcome our sins and live with Him for eternity in heaven, but many continue going the wrong way. As a result, God at times allows tragedy to wake us up, so we will repent of our sins, turn to Him, and gain eternal life.

Outside of this, God allows trials in our lives to help us grow into better people. Even if people choose not to go to heaven, trials still teach us valuable lessons in this life that we could never learn without them. The Bible says that we should learn to “glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope” (Rom. 5:3, 4). I’ve heard so many stories, even from non-believers, who have looked back on trials, and said they have made them look at life in a new way! While many criticize God for allowing suffering, God knows best.

Hebrews 12:11 says, “Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” While God does not like suffering, He allows trials to train us and make us better people if we let them. Those who are trained by suffering are those who accept it and grow from it. Those who are not trained by it become bitter against God. In spite of this, God allows suffering as a test.

Suffering is not contrary to love. It is a sign of God’s love. That’s why Peter says, “do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that

when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy” (1 Pet. 4:12, 13). Again, this is not God’s preferred method any more than it is a parent’s preferred method, but at times discipline is necessary.

Still, there are other reasons for suffering. While there are times we will not understand, God has reasons. We may say, “I can’t see what good reason God would have for letting innocent children die,” and yet some people have abortions because they say it will save the child from having a bad life. People who cannot see the future kill babies, claiming that they are saving a child from a bad life, and then accuse God, who knows the future, of being unfair for letting children die. What we have to understand is that God is looking down on the maze of our lives from above. He sees the big picture.

So many people focus their attention on this life, but God knows that this little life is nothing compared to eternity. God is trying to get people into heaven so they can live forever. Think about it. If you could let your child live this life and lose eternal life, or die now and live forever in heaven, what would you choose? If the child is good now but will grow up and turn evil, and you could save their soul if you let them die now, what would you do? Or perhaps by the death of one person, someone else might turn to God. It happens all the time. If letting a child die could save both the child and another person for eternity, wouldn’t it be worth it? You know the answer. Clearly, allowing pain and suffering is no evidence that God does not exist or that God is unfair. On the contrary! It is just another evidence of God’s love for us.

Lie – The Bible was written by men

Today many people make this claim, stating that the Bible was written by men, but the Bible has never claimed to be a man-made book. While men did pencil the words, the Bible claims, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Tim. 3:16). Think of it this way. There have been some quadriplegics who have written books. Clearly, they did not write the book by their own hands. They told the book to others, who then wrote them. Still, the fact that someone else moved the pencil, or typed the words, does not make that person the author. The author is the person from whose mind it originated. It’s the same with the Bible.

Yes, men were used as pencils in the hand of God to write the words, but the claim of the Bible is that it came from the mind of God. So from a practical level, we may say that because men wrote it, they may have made grammatical errors, so all the commas may not be in the right place in the translation. Or perhaps in recalling an incident, one disciple may mention something another disciple did not mention. However, since the word comes from the mind of God, these words and principles can be entirely trusted. This is proven on many levels.

Perhaps the most amazing evidence that the Bible is inspired by God is seen through prophecy. The Bible says, “prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21). God moved on the hearts and minds of these men to write the words of the Bible, revealing to them events that would come in the future.

Throughout history, the Bible has accurately unfolded the rise and fall of nations in a way that no one can dispute. Many of these prophecies are so clear that even the greatest adversaries of the Bible cannot deny them but merely accuse the prophecies of being written after the fulfillment. This only proves that the prophecies are too accurate to be ignored. God has predicted the rise and fall of kings, and nations, in advance, etched in the words of the Bible. How could the Bible do that if it was not written by God? The Bible had even revealed many scientific facts long before science knew them, like the water cycle (Job 36:27), the expanding universe (Zech. 12:1), or the shape of the earth (Isa. 40:22).

Still, for years men fought the historical facts of the Bible. Many said that the Bible was not historically accurate. They claimed certain men, or cities, or even nations never existed, as presented in the Bible. Yet, time and time again, artifacts were repeatedly dug up to prove the Bible's accuracy. This has been so strongly established that today even its skeptics have finally admitted that it is historically accurate, and the Bible is used for its historical value in many secular universities.

Outside of this, the Bible is full of other characteristics that seem to indicate it is more than simply a man-made book. Among these is the fact that "the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). The Bible alone claims to be able to cut into a man's heart, doing spiritual heart surgery.

The Bible pricks the conscience in a way no other book can because it is a living book. The Bible claims to be “living and powerful.” That means the living God can speak through the words of the Bible, right into a person’s “soul and spirit.” The Bible is living because God is alive and speaks through it. This has been experienced by countless people across the globe.

In addition, the Bible is also powerful because God supplies power to those who try to obey it. As a result, the Bible has changed countless lives throughout history, and it still does today. Many have “been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever” (1 Pet. 1:23). The Bible has supernaturally converted masses.

Still, even among those who agree that the Bible is unique, an attempt to challenge the authority of the Bible has led some to claim that it has been changed by man, but this is just not true. If God is great enough to write this book, isn’t He big enough to preserve it from error? Of course, the Bible says, “The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge” (Prov. 22:12). The discovery and accuracy of the Dead Sea scrolls give evidence that God has preserved His word.

While many today have fallen for the idea that the Bible is a man-made book, claiming that it was written by men, changed by men, and is full of contradictions, this book has proven on multiple levels that it is far more than simply a man-made book. Those who are willing to study it prayerfully and with an open mind will soon find any so-called discrepancies resolved. The claim of the Bible is that it is the word of God. God’s plea is, “Come and see” (John 1:39). So why don’t you read it for yourself and put it to the test?

Lie – Once a believer is saved, they can no longer become lost.

The idea that once a believer is saved they can no longer be lost would be like saying once you're saved you lose your freedom to choose. We are not chained to heaven once we are saved, and yet it's amazing how many Christians believe that once a person is saved, they cannot be released from the contract of salvation. God, they claim, holds them hostage as Christians, and eternal life is forced on them, even if they try to turn away from it.

This idea that once a person has accepted Christ and been saved they can no longer be lost was once rejected by most major denominations. Today, it is growing in popularity among certain circles, and yet the verses used to support this theory are weak in contrast with the multitude of verses that contradict it. While Jesus says of believers that no one shall "snatch them out of My hand," He later clarifies that this is on the condition that they continue to walk with Him, adding, "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out" (John 10:28; 15:6). Those who turn from God will be cast out.

While many use the verse where Jesus says He won't let anyone snatch us out of His hand to claim that we cannot be lost once we are saved, they miss the point. The point Jesus is making is that He is powerful enough to keep us from falling into the devil's pits. This theme is repeated throughout the Bible. Jude 1:24 says that God "is able to keep you from stumbling." Again, 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but

God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." These verses do not imply that you cannot fall but that God will give you the power not to fall in any temptation if you stay connected to Christ.

God is not saying that after we are saved, we cannot willfully leave Him by choosing to live in sin. After all, weren't the devil and all the fallen angels once saved also? Wasn't King Saul once saved? Wasn't Demas once saved? Didn't they fall into temptation and lose their salvation? Even Jesus speaks of those who "believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away" (Luke 8:13). Why else would we be warned to "contend earnestly for the faith" so that we aren't "fallen from grace" (Jude 1:3; Gal. 5:4)?

The warnings against turning from God and back to a life of sin are permeated throughout the Bible for a reason. The Bible speaks of those "having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith" (1 Tim. 5:12). We are also told that "when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity... he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered" (Eze. 3:20). Peter says that if the saved fall back in their sins and "are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning" (2 Pet. 2:20). The Bible is clear that it is possible for God to "take away his part from the Book of Life" (Rev. 22:19). It is possible to let go of our salvation, even after we have accepted Christ. How much clearer could God make it?

In spite of what some may tell you, the Bible is full of conditions to salvation. Look at all the “ifs” in the Bible when it speaks about our salvation. Paul says you will be saved “if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off” (Rom. 11:22). He also speaks of the gospel “by which also you are saved, if you hold fast” (1 Cor. 15:2). Jesus even says, “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love” (John 15:10). And Hebrews tells us that we are Christ’s “if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,” adding that “if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment” (Heb. 3:14; 10:26, 27).

While there are an abundance of Bible verses that say we can fall back into a lost condition, this does not mean that we become lost the moment we sin. We don’t bounce from lost to saved every time we sin and repent. When we sin, God gives us “time to repent” (Rev. 2:21). God is patient, willing to forgive us over and over (See Matt. 18:21, 22). If we continue in rebellion and refuse to repent, we can fall into a lost condition. The good news is that even those who have fallen back into a life of sin need not lose hope. The Bible gives us the assurance that while we can lose our salvation, we can also regain our salvation. We can return back to God. God says, “Return to Me... and I will return to you,” “and I will heal your backslidings” (Zech. 1:3; Jer. 3:22). As long as you are trying to follow Jesus, you need not fear. God will do everything He can to save you because He is “not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9).

Lie – Under grace, we don't have to keep God's law.

Today, whenever people talk about the law or rules in the Christian life, you are bound to hear the response, "We're under grace!" My response is usually, "So is it okay for me to kill and steal?" Of course, they say, "No, but..." and the 'but' is usually where the hidden deception lies. People still have the idea that grace somehow changes our relation to God's law (as if it turns the Ten Commandments into the ten suggestions), but let's see what the Bible says.

Paul says, "sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). Notice what Paul is saying. He is saying that once you are saved by grace, sin doesn't have power over you because God has come inside your heart and given you the power to resist sin. That's what the Christian life is about. It is about God's power to overcome sin. That's why Paul immediately adds, "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not" (Rom. 6:15)!

Just because God shows you mercy, forgives you by His grace, and will continue to forgive you, that is not an excuse to keep sinning. The modern mentality that says we cannot stop sinning or that we no longer need to try and obey God's law is a terrible deception. Paul warns, "do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh," while people say, "We are delivered to do all these abominations," because we are under grace (Gal. 5:13; Jer. 7:10). What a tragedy. The purpose of grace is not to make us free to break the law. It is to set us free from sin and give us power to obey the law!

You see, after grace forgives our past sins, God gives us the power to overcome the present sins in our lives. While Paul says that “if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law,” he immediately adds that those who practice things like fornication, murder, drunkenness, and the like “will not inherit the kingdom” (Gal. 5:18, 21). Think about it. Paul said if you keep having sex outside marriage or getting drunk, you won’t go to heaven. If Paul said that today, many Christians would retaliate, “I’m not under the law. I’m under grace,” to which Paul would reply, “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it” (Rom. 6:1, 2)?

In response to the idea that saved people don’t have to worry about keeping God’s law, Paul replies, “That’s ridiculous! Just because you are under grace doesn’t mean we should not talk about rules or laws! On the contrary! Now that we are saved, we should talk more about rules, and try harder to obey God’s laws than ever, since we have the power of grace!”

Once we are saved, grace doesn’t change our relationship to the Ten Commandments. Grace doesn’t change the nature of the law. Instead, after we accept Christ, we not only find pardon through grace, but we also find power through grace. What most don’t realize is that grace is two-fold. It serves two purposes. The moment we accept Christ, grace supplies the pardon for our past sins. After we accept Christ, grace also supplies the power to overcome our present existing sins.

In 2 Corinthians 12:9, Jesus Himself says, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made

perfect in weakness.” You see, here Jesus defines grace as power. While grace supplies pardon for your past sins, once you accept Christ, grace also supplies the power to overcome sin. That’s why 2 Peter 3:18 tells us to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord.” When we accept Christ, grace gives us the power to grow as Christians. You see, grace doesn’t change the nature of the law. It changes us.

Certainly, even as Christians, we sometimes slip into sin and need the grace of forgiveness. Once we are saved, grace still forgives our slips and falls. However, while grace will offer to forgive us as we work to overcome our sins – that’s right, Christians are to work under grace (See Phil. 2:12, 13) – the purpose of grace is not to allow us to keep sinning. It is to give us power to overcome sin, as Christ “overcame” (Rev. 3:21). Grace works in us to help us get the victory over sin.

So when people say, “I don’t need to worry about keeping the law because I’m under grace,” they have missed the point of grace. This misuse of grace was around in the early church. Paul tried to combat it by asking, “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” And, “Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?” (Rom. 6:1, 15). Jude also warned against “ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness,” and yet that is what many Christians are doing today when they use grace to make light of breaking God’s law (Jude 1:4). This attitude is exactly what was being warned against, so be on your guard. Those who teach that grace changes our relationship to the law are misrepresenting the grace of God. Under grace, we are not less obligated to keep the law but more obligated because we have the power of God.

Lie – Jesus has changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday in honor of the resurrection.

Some say the fact that Jesus rose on the first day of the week proves that Sunday is the new Sabbath. Of course, that would be no different than saying the fact that Jesus died on Friday proves that Friday is the new Sabbath. The act, without a verbal command, proves nothing. Now, if Jesus had stated that He was going to change the Sabbath to the first day, then the resurrection could have confirmed it. The statement with the act would give us clear confirmation, just as God did in the beginning. God made the statement that He “blessed the seventh day and sanctified it,” then confirmed it by an act when He “rested from all His work” (Gen. 2:3).

While we have the action of the resurrection, we have no statement where God said He was going to change the Sabbath. On the contrary! All through the Old Testament, God said that the Sabbath was on “the seventh day,” which is Saturday. In light of this, instead of proving that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday, the resurrection actually proves the opposite. It proves that the Sabbath was still on Saturday, the seventh day of the week. Think about it.

It seems kind of strange that Jesus waited until Sunday to rise from the grave. He died just before the Sabbath began, and then He arose again right after the Sabbath ended. Why did He wait in the tomb during the Sabbath? There must have been a reason, but it wasn't to make a new Sabbath. It was to affirm the Sabbath. It's no coincidence that Jesus rested in the tomb until the Sabbath was over. Just as God rested on the

Sabbath after the work of creation, God rested on the Sabbath after completing the work of man's redemption, which is a symbol of our re-creation.

According to the Bible, the world was created through Jesus. We are told that "by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible" (Col. 1:16). "All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:3). Jesus was the creative agent who formed the world. When it says "God created" the world, it is talking about the Father working in coordination with Jesus, which is why God is referred to as "Us" (Gen. 1:1, 26). When we see that "He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done," we see that Jesus was resting on the Sabbath from His work (Gen. 2:2). That is why Jesus is called the "Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28). The same Jesus who rested on the Sabbath after completing the work of creation also rested after completing the work of redemption, proving the Sabbath is still binding.

The truth is that the Sabbath was changed in honor of the resurrection, but it was not done by Jesus, and it is not supported by the Bible. History records the fact that the early Christian Church actually changed the day in honor of the resurrection, with no support from the Bible. This was not done until long after the disciples died. Their own Catechism states, "We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday... because Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday" (Rev. Geiermann, *The Convert Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, p. 50, 2nd edition. 1910). Again, "Sunday is

a Catholic institution... from the beginning to end of scripture there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first” (*Catholic Press*, August 25, 1900).

Cardinal Gibbons challenges, “You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify” (Gibbons, *Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 111). Again we read, “Perhaps the boldest thing, the most revolutionary change the Church ever did, happened in the first century. The holy day, the Sabbath, was changed from Saturday to Sunday. ‘The day of the Lord’ was chosen, not from any direction noted in the Scriptures, but from the (Catholic) Church’s sense of its own power...People who think that the Scriptures should be the sole authority, should logically become 7th Day Adventists, and keep Saturday holy” (*St. Catherine Church Sentinel*, Algonac, Michigan, May 21, 1995).

The quotes supporting this are endless, and yet the irony is that, while the Catholic Church itself says, “We changed the Sabbath without any support from the Bible,” many Protestants, and even modern Catholics, remain in denial over their admission. That would be like a criminal admitting to his crime and the judge saying, “No, you didn’t do it.” While some Catholics today deny their history, the multitude of quotes cannot be hidden. The Sabbath was changed in honor of the resurrection, but the change was not made by Jesus. History records that it was made by the Catholic Church without any support from the Bible.

Lie – Jesus turned water into alcoholic wine.

On the surface, it appears from the story in John 2:1-12 that Jesus turned water into alcohol. That is until you realize that the word “wine” in the Bible did not distinguish between fermented and unfermented wine. In the Bible, the word wine sometimes simply refers to unfermented grape juice, while other times it refers to fermented juice, which we commonly call wine. That’s because wine is simply juice that is fermented. In essence, it is the same drink, so they used the same word for it. That’s why wine is sometimes referred to as good (See Isa. 55:1), while other times wine is referred to as bad (See Prov. 23:31, 32). When you learn this, it becomes obvious that Jesus did not turn water into alcohol.

Since there was no refrigeration, preservation was difficult, so juice got old and fermented quickly. Because the new fresh juice didn’t stay good for long, it was harder to get. This is why the new fresh juice was considered the “good” quality wine. Today some refer to the harder alcohol as the “good stuff,” which only adds to the confusion, but when we understand the context, we realize that the good wine was the fresh wine. That is why, after Jesus turned water to wine, the guests said that the host served the inferior wine first but “kept the good wine until now” (John 2:10).

While some justify the use of alcohol today, claiming that the Bible gives permission to use wine in moderation, the issue today is not the same as it was two thousand years ago. Without the preservation abilities that we have today, it was impossible to see the moment and degree to which wine began to

ferment. Since there was initially no clear distinction between unfermented and fermented juice, God did not strictly tell His people to avoid grape juice but simply cautioned not to be “given to much wine,” or juice (Titus 2:3, 1 Tim. 3:8). That is, while they were permitted to drink grape juice cautiously, they were to avoid drinking too much for fear of getting some fermented juice and getting drunk.

Some sins “God overlooked” due to certain circumstances. We know this by the example of David and his many wives. While it was a sin to have multiple wives, God overlooked David’s sin because he was confused by the cultural norms in society around him. Similarly, many people are confused about the issue of alcohol. Certainly, “these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). According to the Bible, the use of alcohol is a sin, and it is time for Christians to stand up against this evil that has become such a terrible curse, not only to society but also to the church.

Paul tells Christians, “do not be drunk with wine” (Eph. 5:18), adding that those who practice “drunkenness... will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:21). While the Bible condemns getting drunk, Jesus turned six water pots into wine “containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece” (John 2:6). Would Jesus put such a great temptation to get drunk in front of people if the Bible says getting drunk is a sin?

Since alcohol is addictive, a certain percentage of those who take a drink will become alcoholics. At the same time, those who have used alcohol know that it lowers inhibitions, making it easier to fall into sin under the influence. The Bible confirms this, warning

that alcohol alters judgment, as many have “erred through wine, and through intoxicating drink are out of the way” (Isa. 28:7). In light of this, would Jesus have put such a temptation in front of His people? James 1:13 says, “Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am tempted by God;’ for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.”

Habakkuk 2:15 even warns, “Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, pressing him to your bottle, even to make him drunk,” but according to many Christians, that’s exactly what Jesus did. For Jesus to turn water into alcohol, He would have to go against His own word. In fact, Jesus said that some would be led to commit sinful offenses, but “woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea” (Luke 17:1, 2). Jesus makes it clear here that it is a sin to tempt someone, and yet placing alcohol in front of His people would have tempted them to get drunk, which the Bible condemns. That would have been a sin, but we know that Jesus was “without sin” (Heb. 4:15).

While some justify getting drunk with the claim that Jesus turned water into alcohol, those who have come to this conclusion are guilty of surface reading without actually studying the full text. The bottom line is that many who claim that Jesus turned water into alcohol are not really looking for the truth in the Bible at all but simply trying to justify their own habit. The Bible repeatedly warns against getting drunk, and yet many use the miracle of Jesus to justify their sin. Those who sincerely search will find that Jesus did not turn water into booze but juice.

Lie – Our soul goes straight to heaven or hell the moment we die.

While the idea that our soul or spirit continues to live after our body dies is a highly popular theory, even within Christian circles, it is not supported by the Bible. This belief originated within the church long ago through the teaching of the immortal soul. Many within the church today claim that people have an immortal soul, which means the soul cannot die, but this idea was not derived from the Bible. While many today believe that man was created by God with inherent immortality, the Bible consistently refers to man as “mortal,” while referring us to the “Lord of Lords, who alone has immortality” (Job 4:17; 1 Tim. 6:16). Only God has inherent immortality.

Because God did not create man to be inherently immortal, He gave Adam and Eve the “tree of life” to eat from, so they could continue to live forever (Gen. 2:9). When the first couple sinned, God removed the tree of life, and man was subject to death. Through Christ, God has promised to restore immortality to man, but that has not happened yet. We were not created immortal, and we are not immortal now. According to the Bible, it is only when Jesus returns that “this mortal must put on immortality.” It is only then that we can say, “Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:53, 54). Until then, we are still subject to death.

When Jesus comes back, the righteous people who were faithful to Christ will then be given the gift of immortality. That’s why the Bible says that “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have

everlasting life” (John 3:16). Everlasting life is a gift only given to the righteous when Jesus returns. That’s why the hope of the Christian is the resurrection! The Bible says, “the Lord Himself will descend from heaven... And the dead in Christ will rise” up out of their graves (1 Thes. 4:16). Think about it. If people went straight to heaven or hell when they died, why would we need a resurrection of the dead? Why would the resurrection, at Jesus’ coming, be the great hope of the Christian?

According to the Bible, we do not go straight to heaven or hell when we die, but we wait in the grave until the resurrection. While some people twist a few verses to say that the soul continues to live after death, the Bible plainly says that souls die. Ezekiel 18:20 says, “The soul who sins shall die.” Jesus adds that we should “fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt. 10:28). The point is, souls die. Souls and spirits do not keep living forever. The Bible makes this very plain. While death remains a mystery to many, it does not have to be. The Bible tells us clearly what death will be like.

The key to understanding the mystery of death is first to find out how life began. The Bible tells us that life began when “God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Gen. 2:7). In the Bible, the words ‘breath’ and ‘spirit’ often come from the same word – ‘ruach’ in Hebrew or ‘pneuma’ in Greek – which also refer to the breath (or air) we breathe. This is why the Bible says, “the body without the spirit [or breath] is dead,” adding, “You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust” (Jas.

2:26, Ps. 104:29). The point is, when our breath leaves us, we die and return to dust. “All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust” (Eccl. 3:20). That is why the Bible says that when we die, we rest in the “grave” (Job 17:13).

When we die, we simply die. We don’t think or feel. We don’t wander around the earth as spirits or haunt the living like ghosts. We don’t fly into heaven or suffer in hell. The Bible says, “the dead know nothing,” and even their memory “is forgotten” (Eccl. 9:5). We are told that “there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going” (Eccl. 9:10). Death is like a long nap. That’s why the Bible refers to being “dead” as “taking rest in sleep” (John 11:14, 13). Death is like sleep without dreams. People don’t see, hear, or feel anything until we “awake in Your likeness” (Ps. 17:15). That’s why the Bible refers to death as sleep and the resurrection as waking up!

When a man dies, and he is sleeping in the grave, “His sons come to honor, and he does not know it” (Job 14:21). After we die, our spirits do not float around the earth, heaven, hell, nirvana, or some place of suffering. We are told that David, one of the most righteous men in the Bible, is “dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day... For David did not ascend into the heavens” yet (Acts 2:29, 34). According to the Bible, we don’t go straight to heaven or hell. Death is like a sweet sleep without dreams, where we wait until the day when “all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (John 5:28, 29).

Lie – Hell burns forever.

While many Christians believe that the moment an evil person dies, they go straight to hell where they say people are currently burning, the Bible does not say that. It says that the dead are in the grave and “the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (John 5:28, 29). Until Jesus returns and raises the dead, “the wicked are reserved for the day of doom” (Job 21:30). If they are reserved in the grave, hell must not be burning now.

After Jude says the wicked are “reserved” for judgment, he adds that Sodom and Gomorrah were “set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire” (Jude 1:6, 7). God uses the fires of Sodom and Gomorrah as an example of hell. If the fires that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah are an example of hell, then hell will be a fire that comes down from heaven, destroys the wicked, and turns them to ashes. That’s just what the Bible teaches. Perhaps the best support for this is found in Revelation 20:9, where we see hell taking place and are told that “fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.”

After this fire devours them, “Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death” (Rev. 20:14). If death and hades are cast into “the lake of fire,” that means hell must have an end. And why does the Bible refer to the lake of fire as the second death? Because the wicked die once in this life, then they are raised in the resurrection to face the judgment

where they die a second time, thus, the second death (See Heb. 9:27; Rom. 14:10). If they burned forever, they would not call the lake of fire the second “death.”

The Bible continues to affirm this. After the fires of hell go out, the Bible tells us that the wicked will be gone. David says, “For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; Indeed, you will look diligently for his place, but it shall be no more,” adding, “he was no more; indeed I sought him, but he could not be found” (Ps. 37:10, 36). Obadiah 1:16 says the wicked “shall be as though they had never been.” Proverbs 10:25 also affirms that “the wicked is no more.” We are told that even the devil will eventually be destroyed. God says of the devil, “I brought a fire from your midst; it devoured you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you... You have become a horror, and shall be no more forever” (Eze. 28:18, 19). Fortunately, even the devil will eventually be no more.

Speaking of hell, Malachi adds, “all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up” and “will leave them neither root nor branch... For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet” (Mal. 4:1, 3). According to the Bible, all that will be left of the wicked will be their ashes. Isaiah 47:14 says, “they shall be as stubble, the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame; It shall not be a coal to be warmed by, nor a fire to sit before!” After the wicked are burned up, the Bible says the fire will go out, and there will not even be a lump of smoldering coal left!

While the Bible repeatedly says the wicked will be destroyed, some verses, on the surface, seem to imply that hell burns forever, which causes some

confusion. When the highly symbolic book of Revelation says, “the smoke of their torment ascends forever” (Rev. 14:11), this does not mean the universe will be polluted by the smoke of the wicked for eternity. It is symbolically saying that the wicked will never live again. When the Bible refers to hell as forever, or as “everlasting destruction,” it means their destruction lasts forever (2 Thes. 1:9). That’s why the Bible says the wicked are “destroyed forever” (Ps. 92:7). Everlasting destruction, and verses like it, symbolically mean that the wicked will be destroyed, and the results will be everlasting. That is, they will be “no more forever” (Eze. 28:19).

You see, many people ignore the majority of Bible verses that say hell will end and be no more, while they cling to a few verses which they interpret as saying that hell burns forever, as if they want the wicked to suffer for eternity, when the Bible clearly tells that this is not true. The truth is, while hell is real, and God will finally destroy the wicked, destruction is so foreign to the character of God that the Bible even calls the final destruction of the wicked “His unusual act” (Isa. 28:21). The reason God is waiting so long to destroy the wicked is because He is “not willing that any should perish” (2 Pet. 3:9). God does not want anyone to die in the fires of hell, but tragically many will. The good news is that after the fires of hell burn up, the wicked will be gone forever, and “there shall be no more death” or “pain” (Rev. 21:4). How could God make that promise if hell continued burning forever? Besides, could we really enjoy heaven knowing lost loved ones were burning in hell below us, forever? Of course not.

Lie – The rapture will occur before the tribulation.

Some say Christians don't have to worry about the tribulation, when the antichrist comes, and when the mark of the beast is set up because they will already be raptured into heaven before the tribulation. This idea, based largely on popular modern Christian movies and novels, is more fiction than reality. The idea of a pre-tribulation rapture is actually a new theory that was not accepted by our Protestant founders because the Bible does not support it. The theory didn't really become popular until later in the twentieth century.

While the word 'rapture' isn't in the Bible, the concept of being 'caught up' with rapt, or force, is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17, which says, "the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." While many Christians claim that this verse is talking about a pre-tribulation rapture, the verse actually doesn't say anything about the tribulation.

While the verses do not specifically tell us if the event occurs before, during, or after the tribulation, we can find clues about the timing of this event, in relation to the tribulation, by comparing the events in the verse—like clouds, trumpet, and the raising of the saints—with a parallel verse. Amazingly, we find a parallel picture of the second coming of Jesus, in which we see the Lord and His angels "coming on the clouds...with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect" (Matt. 24:30, 31). Again we see clouds,

trumpet, and raising the saints. Clearly, these verses are talking about the same event, but Matthew tells us that this takes place immediately “after the tribulation” (Matt. 24:29). So when we look at it in context, the most popular verse that many people use to support a pre-tribulation rapture occurs after the tribulation!

Still, some claim that since 1 Thessalonians 5:2 follows with, “the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night,” this must refer to the “rapture,” or secret coming, of Christ. Again, compare this to 2 Peter 3:10, which says, “the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.” Both verses compare the coming of Jesus to a thief, but Peter tells us that the heavens will pass away and the earth will melt, clearly a reference to the second coming of Christ. The term, “like a thief,” does not mean Jesus is coming secretly in the rapture. It means those who are not watching will be unprepared for His coming.

Pastors who try to break up the second coming of Jesus into two separate events are leading you into one of Christianity’s most popular delusions. The term ‘rapture’ never appears in the Bible, and there is no clear reference to such an event where people disappear and beam up into heaven, like something from Star Trek. Still, many continue to twist Bible verses that speak about the second coming in an attempt to fit them into their fictional rapture scenario, like this “left behind” reference. Check it out.

After telling us the second coming follows “the tribulation,” Jesus compares His coming to the flood,

saying, as “Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left” (Matt. 24:38-40). While some claim that those “taken” are taken to heaven in the rapture, the verse compares the ones taken to those who were “taken” in the flood, when “the flood came and destroyed them” (Luke 17:27). According to the Bible, the ones taken are not taken to heaven but to their destruction. We know this because after Jesus says this, Peter asks, “Where Lord?” He can’t be asking where the one in the field is because we know where he is. He is asking where the one is taken to, and Jesus replies, “Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered” (Luke 17:37). That is, “wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered” (Matt. 24:28). Jesus is saying “their corpses I will give as meat for the birds,” confirming that the wicked are taken to their death (Jer. 19:7).

The Bible repeatedly refers to the literal coming of Jesus, “when the Son of Man comes in His glory,” along with the “resurrection” of all “who have fallen asleep” (Matt. 25:31; 1 Cor. 15:12; 1 Thes. 4:13). Those who try to break up the second coming into two different events, saying that the rapture occurs before the literal second coming, will be confused when they find themselves thrust into the midst of the tribulation and unprepared for the final crisis. Just like at the first coming of Christ, many have confused the prophecy and will be unprepared for the second coming. They will not be taken to heaven before the tribulation, and many unprepared Christians will fall for the mark of the beast.

Lie – The mark of the beast is a chip under the skin.

The mark of the beast is not a literal chip implant. A few things tell us it is not literal. Revelation 7:3 says that the final tribulation will not come until God has “sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” According to the Bible, all will either be marked or sealed. If the mark is literal, God’s people will have some kind of literal seal on their forehead too, but this is not what God is referring to, as we will see.

In Deuteronomy 6:8, God said His laws were to be bound “as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes,” or on the forehead. Because the Jews were too focused on externals, they made little copies of the law, called phylacteries, and wrapped them around their hand and forehead. Some Jews still wear phylacteries, but they clearly missed the point. God was not asking His people to put literal copies of the law on the hand and forehead. He was asking for obedience. He was trying to say, “I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts” (Heb. 8:10). The hand and forehead were symbols.

When someone asks, “Can you give me a hand,” or “I’d like a piece of your mind,” you don’t cut off your hand or start cutting out your brain. These phrases are symbolic. The hand represents one’s actions. The mind represents one’s thoughts or beliefs. When the Bible says some will receive the mark on the forehead or mind, it means they will believe the mark is for the good of society. They will be self-deceived and go along with the mark of the beast. When the Bible says some will receive the mark on the hand, it means some

will not believe it is right but will go along with it in their actions because they fear the punishment.

If the mark is symbolic, what exactly is this mark? Since it is called the mark “of the beast,” we know that this must have something to do with the beast or antichrist. Daniel 7:23 tells us that a “beast” represents a “kingdom” or nation, so the mark of the beast must be instituted by a nation or government. We are further told that this beast, or nation, will “both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed” (Rev. 13:15). The beast will “speak” the mark. Nations speak, telling people to drive slower, with laws. The term “causes” implies force. When the prophecy tells us a beast “speaks and causes” people to do something, it is saying that a nation makes a law forcing people to do something, as laws naturally do.

What is so tragic about this law is that the Bible says it “causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship,” and it will “cause as many as would not worship” to receive the mark of the beast (Rev. 13:12, 15). The central issue around the mark of the beast is “worship.” This law is forcing some form of worship, which means it must be a religious law.

It really isn’t too confusing. The prophecy plainly says the beast will “cause as many as would not worship” to be killed, which means it must be enforced worship. Since God is against this, it must go against the Ten Commandments. Prophecy confirms this, contrasting those who receive “the mark” of the beast with “those who keep the commandments of God” (Rev. 14:11, 12). That means this is a religious law that opposes one of the Ten Commandments. Those

familiar with the Ten Commandments know that they are divided into two parts; the first four address how we worship God, while the last six address how we relate to our fellow man. Since the law enforces worship, it must go against one of the first four commandments, which relate to how we worship God, similar to the laws that took place in Daniel (See Dan. 3, 6).

Since the beast “causes the earth” and “causes all” to action, this must be the solution to a global issue affecting the entire earth (Rev. 13:12, 16). It will be a global push to enforce this law for the sake of the earth. Since the United States cannot pass a religious law, it must be posed as a secular law, but no matter how you dress it up, the prophecy says it is still a religious law enforcing some form of worship.

This false worship will contrast true worship. We know this because just before God warns anyone who “worships the beast,” He appeals, “worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water,” taken almost verbatim from the fourth commandment, which says, “the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day” (Rev. 14:7; Ex. 20:11). Ironically, most equate the term ‘worship’ with Sunday worship. This would fit the prophecy perfectly. While America once had Sunday laws, and some nations still have them, the Bible says Saturday, “the seventh day is the Sabbath” (Ex. 20:10). In light of this, Sunday laws not only pose a threat to Jews and Sabbath-keeping Christians, but God may use these laws as a final appeal for His faithful followers in all churches to return to “the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12).

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