

# The Life and Teachings of Jesus 10

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*Jesus, Savior or Judge?*

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If you have questions, please send them to me. A message can raise questions that make you wonder or that confuse you. There may be questions needing to be asked for clarification. If you are confused, someone else may be confused too. If you have a question, more than likely others do too. So, send me your questions. There might be something you disagree with. Please feel free to send questions. When I teach students how to study, I always have lessons and exercises that include asking questions. Asking questions is essential to learning. From my experience, those who learn how to ask questions, learn how to find answers, and deepen their insights. I look forward to receiving questions from you.

## No repentance in hell

In previous lessons, I answered a question about repentance, hell, and entering heaven. I answered that question with three verses in Revelation and an explanation of the rich man's dialogue with Abraham and with the story of Esau. There is no indication that anyone in hell will change their mind about God's will being right for them. However, Revelation tells us most people refuse to repent before, during, and after God judges them. Also, Jesus said there is a great gulf that separates heaven from hell. It is a fixed and permanent gulf that prevents crossing over from one side to the other. Those in hell may regret being tormented, but they won't repent. They disagree that their judgment is just or right. They do not agree that God's way is the right way. As Revelation 16:9 says, "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory." Whether scorched with the fire of the sun or the fires of hell, they refuse to repent. Daniel 12:2 explains, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Everlasting contempt means it will be forever. Their condition of condemnation will never change.

## Eternal hell

Eternal shame and contempt mentioned in Daniel 12:2 refers to some of the experiences in hell. Revelation 21:8 says of hell, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." The thought of hell should shake everyone to the point of seriously resolving their relationship with God. But

most important is coming to the realization that it is not possible to improve on God's will. You may not want to go to hell, but until you believe, and desire God's way is the only way for you, hell is your eternal destiny.

## Hell for angels, not for humanity

Hell was not God's plan for humanity. God's plan was to bless mankind in paradise. We see that in the garden of Eden. Every need was provided for from food, to water, to purpose and responsibility.

In God's perfect garden of paradise, the Lord warned Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He warned them in order to prevent them from harming themselves. He warned them because He loved them. He warned them like a parent warns his children not to play in the street.

But some insist on doing what they want. To them, the warning from God is restrictive and oppressive. They want to play in the street. They do not believe there is danger. They look at an empty street to verify there is no danger. They feel justified to do as they please. They get hurt, then they blame God for not protecting them and keeping them from harm. As for the faithful servants of God who suffer, the tragedy is we live in a world of sin and suffering. The consequences affect everyone. Servants of God and innocent babies suffer because sin and Satan in the world show no mercy and no fairness.

God warns us about sin and its consequences to help us, not to harm us. His way is not restrictive and oppressive for those who believe God's way of righteousness is the right way. God takes no pleasure in our pain, suffering, or judgment. Lamentation 3:33 says of God, "For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." Eze 18:32 says, "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."

God does not want us to be hurt. Even when He judges us, He has no pleasure in doing so. He created us to live. He created us to enjoy His blessings. Jesus said in John 10:10, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

In John 12:47 Jesus said, "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." In Lu 19:10, Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Romans 5:8 declares the love God has for us, saying, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Jesus came into this world to help us, to save us. Mt 1:21 speaks of the purpose of His miraculous birth, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." God, our Creator, became like us in human flesh. He had one purpose. He wanted to save us from sin and suffering.

Matthew 1:18 says, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Verse 20 records what the angel said to Joseph, "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David,

fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Verse 23 says, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

Jesus was literally God. He was God manifested in the flesh. 1Ti 3:16 says, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

## Jesus our judge

Jesus is God our Savior. But the day is coming when Jesus will be our judge as well.

Jesus said in John 5:22, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." This is shocking to some who think of Jesus only as the Savior. But Jesus is God. He is quite capable of being both Savior and judge. In fact, He fulfills many roles.

Second Cor 5:10 says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Second Tim 4:1 says, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."

Acts 10:40-42 says, "Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Who was raised the third day? Jesus. He will judge the living and the dead.

Acts 17:31 says, "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Why did Jesus say in John 12:47, "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world?" He said His purpose for coming was to save, not to judge. Yet all these other verses say He will judge. Jesus was expressing His intent and desire. He was explaining His purpose for coming. It was not judgment day yet. Until judgment day comes, Jesus is engaged in saving souls, not condemning souls. However, the day is coming when all of creation will be brought to Him. He will judge and be the judge at that time.

Matthew 25:31 describes the judgment seat of Jesus, saying, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." This is judgment day. Jesus is the judge sitting on the throne of His glory.

Matthew 25:32 explains who will be judged, saying, "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from

the goats.” What kind of nations are being referred to here? Jesus discloses who is being judged in Matthew 25:34, saying,

“Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Matthew 25:41 says, “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” And Matthew 25:46 says, “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

Who is being judged here is easy to discern by what is happening to those who are judged. To bring this to light, consider a couple questions.

Do you think the United States will be on the right side or the left side of the throne of Christ? Do you think the United States will be blessed with eternal inheritance or condemned with everlasting fire? Will that be the early United States or the US of today? Will Russia be blessed with eternal inheritance or condemned with everlasting fire? Will Egypt be blessed with eternal inheritance or condemned with everlasting fire? Will that judgment be for early Egypt, middle Egypt, or contemporary Egypt? How about Turkey? What about Ethiopia, before Mohammed or after?

If you are feeling befuddled by the choices, then you are experiencing the problem with saying this passage is about the judgment of nations. Israel will be blessed as a nation with eternal inheritance. But Paul reminds us in Ro 9:6, “Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.” Only the believing Jews will enjoy the eternal blessing of a national inheritance. The unbelieving Jews will be condemned in everlasting fires of hell, not as a nation, but as individuals.

Nations will be judged, but this passage is referring to the multitudes from all nations gathered for judgment by Christ. Government entities and organizations do not burn in the fires of hell forever. Nations are groups of people often over long periods of time with differing cultural and religious policies at different times. People, however, will be blessed with either eternal inheritance or condemned in the everlasting fires of hell. Unbelievers from any nation will be cursed forever in hell. Nations do not burn. People burn.

## Hell not for angels

Jesus said in Matthew 25:41 says, “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

Some might wonder why God prepared hell for the devil and his angels, but not for unbelieving humans. I want to propose a thought for you to consider that resolves a problem arising from such a position.

Did God prepare hell for the Devil and his angels with the intent of creating them for that purpose. Was God’s will and plan in eternity past to create the Devil and his angels for hell? Did God already plan and predestine the Devil and his angels to go to hell?

We would say no. God does not predestine who will trust Him or not trust Him. God predestined what would happen to those who believe in Him and who would not believe in Him. He did not predestine who would believe and not believe.

Why do we say that? There are two verses which shed light on God's intentions. Second Peter 3:9 says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

God is the same and unchangeable. His desire to save free-will beings is the same whether they be humans or angels. This brings up the second verse to consider.

Colossians 1:20 says, "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." God desires none to perish, including things in heaven, like the angels. God's original intent for all humans and angels was to bless them with an eternal inheritance in heaven. God so loved the angels too. He created them to bless them, not to curse them.

Hell was not in the original intention because condemnation was not His purpose for creating angels and humans.

This brings us back to something else to consider. Jesus said in Matthew 25:41. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." The everlasting fires of hell were not prepared for Lucifer. They were prepared for the Devil. In other words, the fires of hell were created because of sin, not because of God's predestined plan to condemn souls in hell. Hell was prepared for the condemned, for the devil and his angels. In our timeline of history, hell was prepared after sin, not before sin.

## Jesus came not to judge

The reason for addressing this point about the purpose of creating hell is due to the statement by Jesus that He came not to judge, although Scriptures make clear He will judge. Just as Jesus came not to judge the world, hell was not prepared for any of God's creation, though hell was prepared. In other words, God's purpose for creating all things was not to condemn. His only purpose was to bless. The Devil and his angels sinned first, and for this reason, hell exists. Hell was not God's original plan or desire.

Revelation 4:11 declares God's purpose for creating all things. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." What is God's will and desire? To bless.

And yet, there is the unfortunate and sad duty of condemnation. Lamentations 3:33 expresses God's feeling about condemning the lost. "For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." But God will afflict and grieve those who refuse to repent, either to help them make the right choice, or to judge them for their final choice.

Likewise in Ezekiel 33:11, God says, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

Your choice is to let God's plan bless you or to choose your plan and be cursed.

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