

What Does “The Smoke of Their Torment Rising Up Forever” Mean? (Hellfire Series Part V)

Revelation 14:11: *And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.*



To many Christians, the fear of an eternal place of torment for unbelievers is very real. In the first four parts of this Hellfire Series, we addressed many of the sources of these fears one at a time. What we have seen is straightforward. First, the concept of “unquenchable fire” comes from the Old Testament and simply means a fire of destruction that burns until its work is done. Second, “weeping and gnashing of teeth” refers to deep regret on the part of those who should know better and has nothing to do with flames and torture. Third, “The Parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus” is just that. It is a parable that demonstrates

the unfaithfulness of the Jewish nation when they rejected Jesus. Fourth, history plainly reveals that the origin of torture and flames in an afterlife comes from pagan origins and is not at all biblical. Finally, here we are looking at the book of Revelation. Do its graphic statements fit in with all that we have previously discovered? Absolutely!

Interpreting Revelation is intricate and much study is needed, including putting events in their proper time frames. Some things are historic; others are prophetic. While we do not believe any one group or individual understands Revelation in its entirety with unflinching accuracy, there is a lot that absolutely fits together harmoniously. We encourage our listeners to email us at inspiration@ChristianQuestions.com with any questions.

The two Revelation texts we will look into are **Revelation 14:10-11** and **Revelation 20:10**.

As we consider these scriptures, we must first note that Revelation is a book of symbols.

Let’s take notice of the main symbols in these two scriptures regarding the hellfire question:

Revelation 14:10-11: *10 He also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.*

Revelation 20:10: *And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

These two separate passages are scripturally connected.

What is Symbolism?



- The use of a symbol to represent a meaning, idea or quality.
- Symbolic meaning attributed to natural objects or facts.

We will analyze whether or not these Revelation texts teach a burning eternal torment. On the surface, they sound pretty ominous!

We’ll closely review four main points:

 *He will be tormented with fire and brimstone*

 *The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever*

These first two points are from **Revelation 14:10-11** and take place in the present day before the Day of Judgment begins.

 *The lake of fire and brimstone*

 *They will be tormented day and night forever and ever*

These last two points are from **Revelation 20:10** and take place in the final (still future) end of the Judgment Day experiences. While these sound similar, one takes place in this age and the other at the end of a yet future age.



Let’s look at the context of **Revelation 14** and offer a general, interpretive perspective on what is happening.

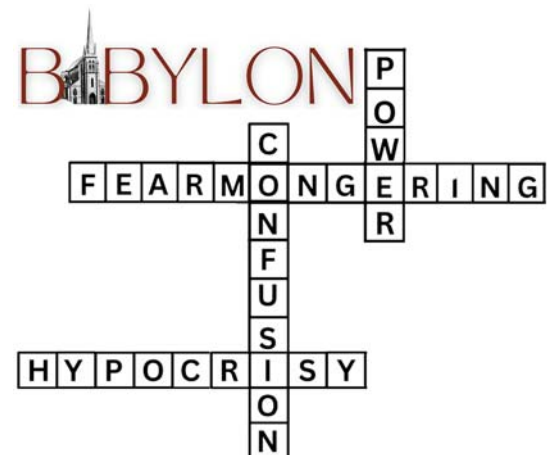
Revelation 14 takes place during the close of when the gospel message goes out. The years spanning the time during which Jesus was on earth until now we call the “Gospel Age.” It is a time of harvest. We are nearing the end of this period, when God is harvesting THE church. During this time, the systems of Christianity are being judged by God based on both doctrine and conduct.



Revelation 14:8: *And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality.*

Babylon is a symbol of the religious systems of confusion, hypocrisy, power and fearmongering that were instituted in the name of Christianity after the apostles were off the scene.

Fallen, fallen shows us that God’s favor is far removed from them as they immorally contaminated the nations with their intoxicating desire for power all in the name of Christ! The Apostle Paul warned us this would happen after he died. **Acts 20:29** states there would be *savage wolves* not sparing the flock.



Revelation 14:9: *Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand.*

WARNING TO THE
TRUE CHURCH



This third messenger warns those individuals who are in harmony with God through Christ to not be party to this vile corruption of Babylon in any of its many beastly or copied forms, to not follow these systems or creeds. The messenger is warning the true church to be separate—to be apart from these things.

God's people are warned to “come out of her My people” in Revelation 18:4 before her total destruction in Revelation 18:21.

There is a serious consequence for partaking of the sins of these systems for God's true people.

📖 **Revelation 14:10:** *He also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be **tormented <928> with fire and brimstone** in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the lamb.*

Again, we are talking about the harvest time at the end of the Gospel Age. It is a time of separation. Those who remain in these false systems become guilty in proportion to their understanding of biblical truths. If they see the error in what these systems do and how they operate but remain attached to the system, there are consequences. Righteous judgment and consequences will be the result of such careless disobedience in this life.

These scriptures do sound ominous! *He will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb* sounds like a person who does not leave the false system will suffer consequences from righteous judgment as a result of disobedience.

We discussed the Greek word for *tormented* in Episode #1346 of this Hellfire Series. It means a touchstone; literally a black stone that tests gold and silver for purity. It is a test of genuineness.



Scripturally, it's used in the sense of seeing how well one copes with difficulties in a resilient way under the most difficult conditions—in other words, testing the mettle of an individual (see **Mark 6:48** and **Revelation 12:2** for examples of this word). It tests the vigor and strength of an individual's genuine commitment to God. This word is NOT a reference to torture; rather, “seriously tested.”

With fire and brimstone—fire destroys what it consumes. Brimstone intensifies the destructive aspect when added to fire, as sulfur fumes are toxic and deadly. Fire and brimstone together symbolically emphasize the severity of the destruction. For more, please listen to Episode #1341.

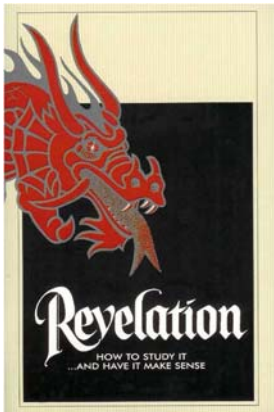
We are looking at **Revelation 14:10**. The fiery trial of destroying earthly thoughts and actions in this life will not be an easy one. These individuals, if they are partaking of the sinfulness of “Babylon” and not completely walking away from all of its influences even when they are given God’s strength to do so, will suffer this “fire” or difficulty—the destruction of their fleshly desires.

This is similar to the expression *weeping and gnashing of teeth* used in the Parable of the Wheat and Tares. (See Episode 1342—Hellfire Series Part II.) The parable also takes place at the end of the Gospel Age harvest time. We’re living in this harvest time now. It’s a time of transition, when Jesus returns, the systems of Christianity are judged and more understanding of Scripture is revealed (**Revelation 14:6, 17:1, 18:4, Daniel 12:4,9,10**).

Jesus gives the parable to the crowd, then takes his disciples aside to continue:
Matthew 13:41-43: *41 The Son of Man will send forth his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, 42 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.*



The Parable of the Wheat and Tares is not about individual people; it is about the process of the development of the true church. Therefore, the true church has developed throughout the Gospel Age alongside and within the corrupted environment of the false church systems. As these two develop together, until that harvest time, there has to be some sort of sifting or separation work..



(Source: *Revelation: How to Study It...and Have It Make Sense*, New Albany Bible Students) The parable first summarizes the Gospel Age by stating that Jesus gave a message which made real Christians (wheat). Once the apostles died (Matthew 13:25: while men slept), Satan gave a false message which created false Christians (tares). The tendency toward this mixed-up Christianity was already active in the apostle’s day (2 Thessalonians 2:7). Paul calls it the mystery of iniquity and the man of sin. John calls it the antichrist (1 John 4:3). Revelation calls it Babylon (Revelation 14:8). Jesus (Matthew 13:30) shows that this combination of true and false Christianity would exist together until the harvest. Jeremiah 51:7-9 explains that God used Christendom (Babylon) and would have healed her, but she would not be healed. Hence Jesus prophesied the harvest separation—the work of gathering true Christians. These true Christians would FIRST be gathered to truth as Luke 17:34-37 suggests; SECONDLY, they would be gathered to heaven itself as Matthew 13:43 suggests.

Free PDF: [“Revelation: How to Study It...and Have It Make Sense”](#)

What’s this *furnace of fire* the tares get thrown into?

Our scripture in **Revelation 14:10** says, *he will be tormented (tested for genuineness) with fire and brimstone*. There is also fire at the end of the Parable of the Wheat and Tares.

This furnace of fire is the Time of Trouble—here is how we know:

Malachi 4:1: *For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts.*

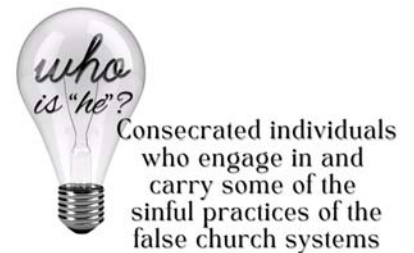
Daniel 12:1: (ASV) *...and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time...*


Weeping and gnashing of teeth symbolizes the deep regret people will feel when they realize they have been a part of a system that has been exposed as doctrinally false and hypocritical. It does NOT symbolize eternal torture.



The *weeping and gnashing* is done in the context of fire which is a destructive force, not a tormenting force. The false doctrines and delusions Satan sowed after the apostles died will be revealed during the time of trouble predicted in the book of Daniel. These false church systems will be brought down, and the true church will be “gathered” into the “heavenly barn.”

Therefore, in **Revelation 14:10**, *he will be tormented with fire and brimstone*, means “he” will be seriously tested through the destruction of his fleshly (as opposed to spiritual) desire and thinking.



 **Revelation 14:11:** *And the smoke of their torment <929> (noun form of the word for testing by a touchstone) goes up forever and ever.*

Smoke continues to ascend after a destructive fire has done its work. In this case, smoke represents a remembrance or evidence of the past, the lingering effects of experience. The smoke is not about their burning up; it is about a remembrance of what happened.



The results of their hard testing and consequences will become a lasting memory and testimony to the sinful and corrupting compromise of that which is sacred. This lesson has everything to do with the memory of the sins committed and nothing to do with any physical tormenting of those who are sinful.

How do we know this smoke rising up forever is not an indication that people are being tortured and tormented? We are told this many times in the Scriptures—let’s look at one example in Isaiah.

Smoke rising up “forever” as a symbol of complete destruction:

Isaiah 34:5,8-10: (ASV) *5 For my sword hath drunk its fill in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Edom, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. 8 For Jehovah hath a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion. 9 And the streams of Edom shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. 10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.*

Again, we refer you to Episode 1341 where we studied *unquenchable fire*. There was a literal fulfillment in the destruction of the Old Testament city of Idumea. The people were sinful and were annihilated. We know for sure this fire is not still literally burning today.

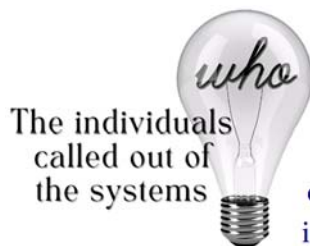
But these verses are also part of the future day of vengeance prophecies, when there will be a day of destruction of earthly systems. The *unquenchable fire* represents the full and complete judgment of sin. The smoke represents the eternal memory that will stand as a permanent learning experience for all.

God designed this permission of evil so that it could be used as a remembrance experience. There is nothing like real-life experience to look back on and say, I never want to go there again! *The smoke* (the remembrance) *going up forever and ever* means something bad happened there and it reminds us of not returning to our old sinful ways.

Revelation 14:10 and **Isaiah 34:10** use the same terms. Revelation has to be interpreted in the context of the rest of the Bible to avoid misunderstanding and misrepresentation. It fits in the symbolism of the rest of the Scriptures.

Revelation 14:11: *...they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.*

No rest day and night—Unlike the smoke rising in remembrance, this goes back to the individuals who were making the mistakes and saying, *If we bring any of the idolatry of the false systems into our newfound freedom in Christ, it will be difficult for us. We will struggle to be as faithful as we would have been without these challenges.*



This is a state of dissatisfaction and unrest—it has nothing to do with torment. This situation exists among those who were called out of the systems but who held onto some of the corruption. When we hold onto what we have known and are used to, there is no place or space for what we are now being given. We cannot hold onto our old false beliefs and practices and expect God to bless us the way He would if we had left it all behind.

This reminds us of the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. We spent all of Episode #1346 going over this parable about the Jewish loss of favor Jesus predicted would come to the nation of Israel and its leadership when that favor would be given to the Gentiles.

Let’s look at some short excerpts from the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. This is when the rich man is in a position of realizing he is now out of God's favor:
Luke 16:27-28: (NIV) *27 He answered, Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, 28 for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment <931>* (again, same word for testing for purity).

In other words, *Warn my brothers! Save them from this humiliation of revealing and anguish of heart. I am sure that if one risen to such favor from such humiliation as Lazarus were to go to them, they would believe and avoid this suffering.*

He is begging on behalf of others (his *brothers*—the rest of the Jewish nation.) He does not want them to go through the regret he is suffering. The “testing” here was when the gospel was given to the Jewish nation, and they rejected it along with their Messiah, Jesus.

This parallels **Revelation 14**. It is the testing of being given the true gospel but being unable to put aside the association with Babylon.

Luke 16:29: (NIV) *Abraham replied, They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.*

The rich man and his brothers were indicted by their past. The religious leadership of Israel wouldn't believe Jesus was the Messiah when he was standing right in front of them. This is their “touchstone” experience. It showed (proved) what they were made of.

At this point in the parable, the rich man (the Jewish nation and its leaders) is debating with Abraham:

Luke 16:30: (NIV) *No, father Abraham, he said, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.*

Abraham had clearly said they had been given everything they needed but they rejected it. The rich man was still pressing and hoping against hope—*Just give them a chance.*

Revelation 14 describes a similar situation in the Gospel Age where God has given dedicated believers His spirit and has drawn them out of the world and the false systems. He shows them how to be separate, but they decide not to be separate because they think they already have everything they need. There is this same kind of testing or proving.

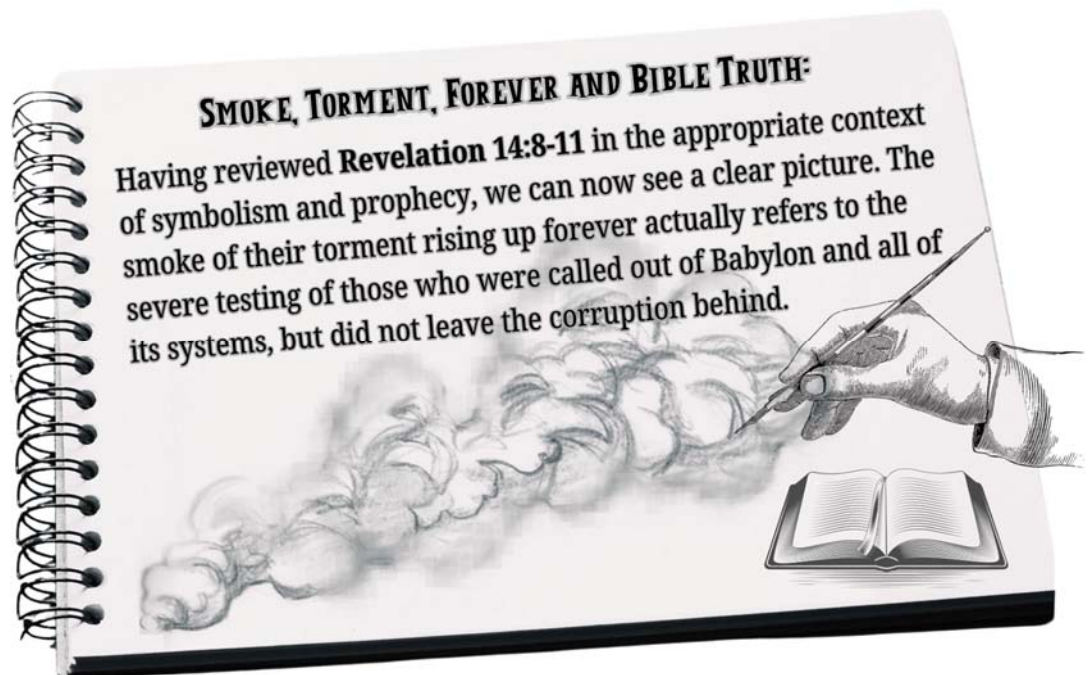
Luke 16:31: (NIV) *He said to him, If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.*

The ruling class as representatives of the Jewish nation had sealed Israel's fate by a continual rejection of the teachings and miracles of their Messiah. (Individual Jews would still have the chance to become followers of Jesus, but God's favor would pass from the nation of Israel to the Gentiles.)

Remember, this was a parable. It was not really Abraham speaking (as he was long dead); it was Jesus using Abraham (whom the Jews revered) to get across his message.

We found out the big twist in the story—Jesus was foreshadowing when he would raise the real Lazarus from the dead about two weeks later, and still the Pharisees wanted to kill Jesus. They were not convinced even by someone coming back from the dead just as Jesus predicted.

We can see the parallel to the end of the Gospel Age, when we have the opportunity to put all the sinfulness of all those systems aside. Some, even hearing the true gospel, cannot do it. They fall into that same category and into that same kind of testing that will lead to an experience remembered by all.



Their example of answering God's privilege with compromised obedience will be a constant reminder to ALL of humanity of the importance of complete loyalty to God and His righteousness.

As we shift to **Revelation 20:10**, let's remember the symbols we have seen so far are absolutely consistent with the rest of Scripture. Therefore, this text won't be a surprise!

To get started, let's look at how the following verses give us a four-part perspective of Satan's influence and power:

Revelation 20:1-2: *1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years:*

1. *The dragon: Satan's domination and intimidation*
2. *The serpent: Satan's deception and lies*
3. *The devil: Satan's nastiness and his intentional harm to any and all who would oppose him*
4. *Satan: All that Satan represents as an opposer of God and as the god of this world*

All of this describes Satan's power and influence. This is what is on trial here.

Revelation 20:7-8: *7 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth...*

This particular prophecy takes place after the long Day of Judgment. This is a final end result, way forward in time. The last prophecy we talked about applies in the present day. They are in different time periods.

All the nations are following godliness. These nations have learned righteousness because Satan’s influence has been cut off for a thousand years. After this time, Satan is allowed to be loosed once again as a final test for ALL of the nations in ALL of the world.

We’re bringing in another parable to show that Revelation ties in with the rest of the Bible.



This is the final future test of the nations that leads to the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats:

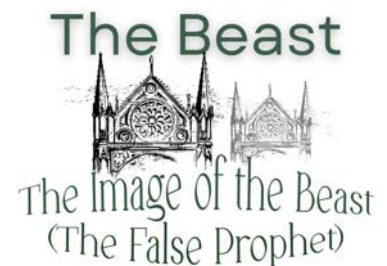
Matthew 25:32: *All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.*

There is a separation here that comes about because Satan, his power and influence are set loose for *a little season—a short time*.

The results of this “little season” of testing will be abundantly clear:

📖 **Revelation 20:10:** *And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented <928> (the act of revelation) day and night forever and ever.*

Like the symbol of Babylon, the *beast* and the *image of the beast* also known as the *false prophet* are personifications of human institutions—corrupt religious systems Satan has used to defile God’s truth and keep mankind in bondage and slavery. The “devil” joining them represents Satan’s civil power over the people of the earth.



Every single system that would pollute God’s truth and draw men from God are revealed as counterfeit and will be destroyed. The memory of the evil perpetuated by these systems will be a constant reminder to mankind.

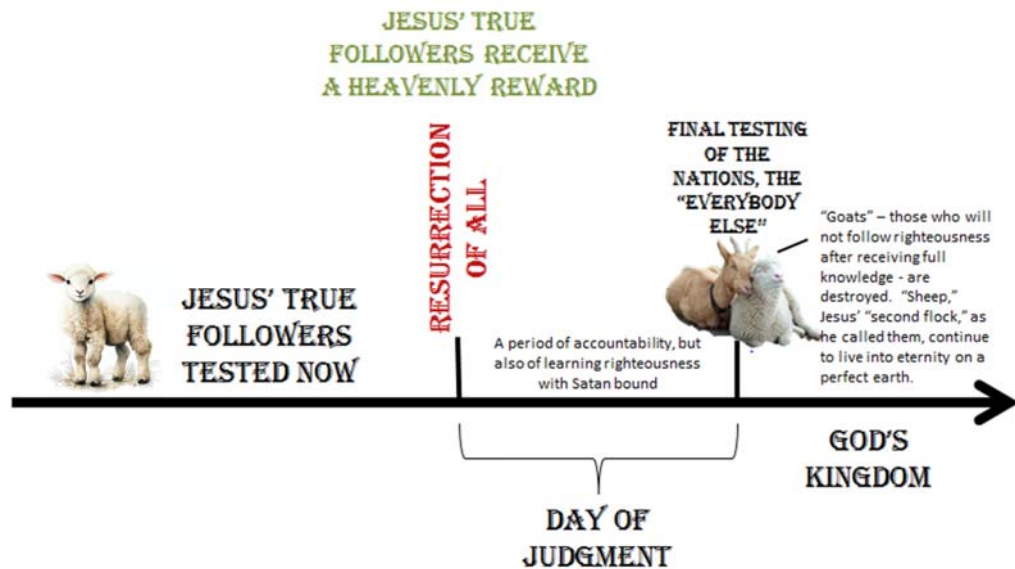
We hear people plead “never forget” when there is a major disaster, such as 9/11 or the Holocaust. Since the 1950’s, Israel honors Holocaust Remembrance Day once a year. The country comes to a complete standstill for two minutes at 10 am. Sirens go off, drivers get out and stand by their vehicles on the roads. The smoke in Revelation represents a much larger remembrance!

When we look at the “never forget” remembrance with the smoke rising up, we see it is for the purpose of educating, not for the purpose of hurting.

The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats:

Matthew 25:41: *Then he will also say to those on his left, Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.*

It will also be with any and every individual who will, even after centuries of God’s grace and peace reigning on earth, reject that grace, harmony and peace. If they reject all of those things, they will be destroyed. Not torment—simply destruction.



Last point: This lake of fire is THE symbol of utter destruction:

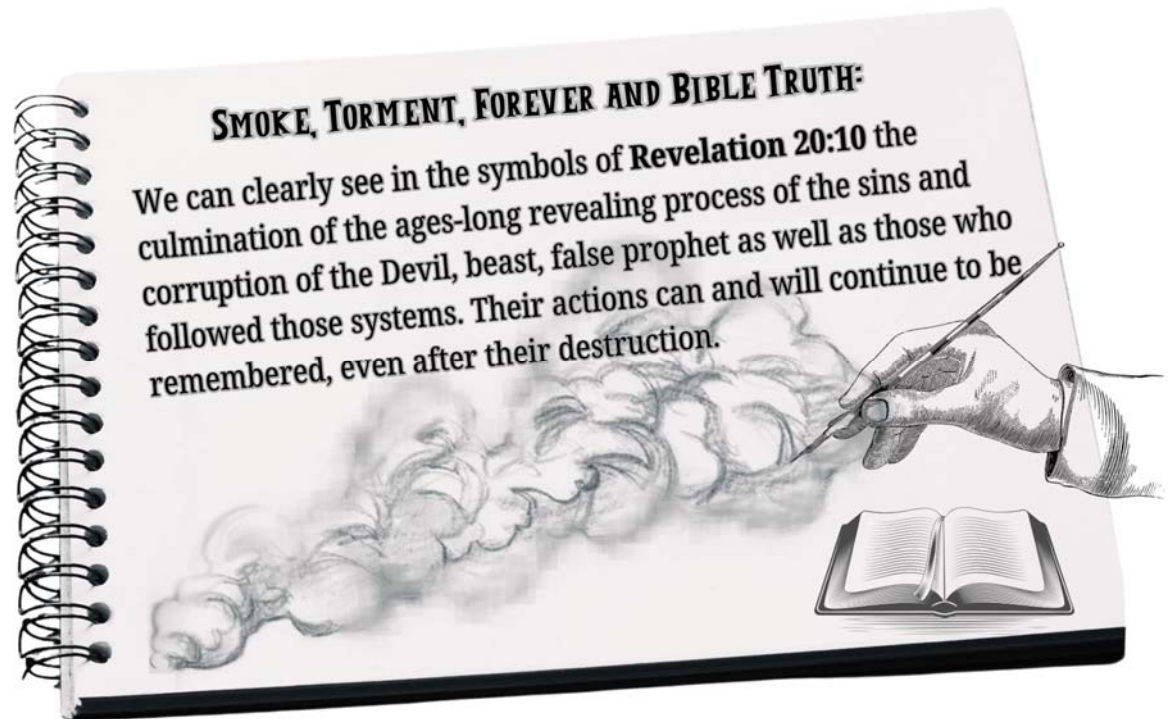
Revelation 20:14: *Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.*

Second death will be the condition of anyone not found written in God’s book of life. It is the final end, a condition from which resurrection and life will no longer be possible.

Because the Scriptures have already unequivocally defined this condition in the symbol of Gehenna, we already know that NO torture happens there. We learned that in the previous episodes.

It all ties together. There is no torture, only simple destruction for those who do not care to follow God’s rules. This is God’s plan. God is a God of love. Revelation shows us this. It shows us the hard way by showing us the underside, the underbelly and guts of all the hard experiences. Revelation doesn’t pull punches. When our experiences bring sin and destruction, it will be reckoned with and remembered forever.

By permitting Satan to interact with mankind and by allowing hurtful systems to exist for a time, God’s purpose is to teach the world the consequences of disobedience.



After this time of experience with evil, God’s plan shows the world moving forward into eternal beauty and perfection. In the minds of humanity will be the remembrance of all those things so no one will ever forget the “never-forget” moment.

Why go to all of this trouble? So God’s plan for ALL of His creation will praise and honor Him forever:

Revelation 21:3-4: 3 *And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,* 4 *and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.*

These scriptures take place when all we have talked about will have been accomplished. The remembrance of mankind’s experience with evil will be an enduring lesson. The systems that perpetrated evil will be destroyed. People will live in God’s kingdom happily and peacefully forever under the guidance of God through Christ.

**So, what does “the smoke of their torment rising up forever” mean?
For Rick, Jonathan, Julie and Christian Questions...
...Think about it!**

All scriptures cited are from the NASB1995 translation unless otherwise noted.



@christianquestionsministries



cqbiblepodcast

Text CQREWIND to 22828
to receive our Weekly Newsletter, Show Notes and Study Questions

Bonus Material and Study Questions

Email us at inspiration@ChristianQuestions.com if you have questions on the symbolism or how to study Revelation in general.



Recommended additional study:

Hellfire Series

<https://christianquestions.com/category/series/hellfire/>

Ep.1237: Will I Survive God’s Final Judgment?

Learning the application and meaning of the Parable of the Sheep and Goats

<https://christianquestions.com/parables/1237-sheep-and-goats/>

Episodes 1249 and 1250: What Will We Be Doing When We Get to Heaven? (Parts II and III)

Learning the destiny of those not fully faithful to the heavenly call

<https://christianquestions.com/doctrine/1250-great-company/>

Ep.1006: Has the Gospel Been Corrupted? (Part I)

The present-day lessons from the Wheat and Tares Parable

<https://christianquestions.com/parables/1006-gospel-corrupted-part/>

Ep.760: Are You a Sheep or a Goat?

Sheep, goats and the final judgment

<https://christianquestions.com/parables/760-are-you-a-sheep-or-a-goat/>



Parents and Bible class teachers, continue your studies on this topic with these short, animated videos for kids at ChristianQuestions.com/YouTube:

- [What does the Bible say about Satan?](https://christianquestions.com/cq-videos/videos-cq-kids/facts-about-satan/)

Touchstone

Here is an exhaustive look at *touchstone* in all of its forms. We are using Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon for the definition, as it is more comprehensive than Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance and its definitions fit all of the uses of the words in the New Testament under consideration.

Touchstone: *noun* Referring to the stone and what it symbolizes.

This stone did symbolize the extracting of truth and true identity, for the stone only showed truth. In similar fashion, the rack of torture was designed as an extractor of truth, though it was set up to create serious pain as its method. We do not ever see this “rack” application in Scripture. Rather, the texts only apply this word in the context of the seriousness or difficulty of being tested.

Touchstone: Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #931 βάσανος: perhaps remotely from the same as 939 (through the notion of going to the bottom)

The King James Version translates this as “torment” 3 times

Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon: 1) a touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the colour of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal 2) the rack or instrument of torture by which one is forced to divulge the truth (never used in Scripture) 3) torture, torment, acute pains 3a) of the pains of a disease 3b) of those in hell after death (interpretative through what we believe to be doctrinal error)

This first text gives us the sense of pains that would test the very fiber of a person. These pains did not have to be merely physical but also emotional. We are reminded of the man with the demon-possessed, self-abusive son who said to Jesus, *If you can help me.*

Also, the young man possessed by the demon Legion:

Matthew 4:24: (KJV) *And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments <931>, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.*

These next two are in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus and show the emotional anguish experienced as a result of the power of the “touchstone” testing upon his heart:

Luke 16:23: (KJV) *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments <931>, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

Luke 16:28: (KJV) *For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment <931>.*

Touchstone: *verb*

1. Referring to the act of actual testing OR revealing of the touchstone

Touchstone: Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #928 βασανίζω from 931

The King James Version translates this as “torment” 8 times, “pain” 1 time, “toss” 1 time, “vex” 1 time, “toil” 1 time

Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon: 1) to test (metals) by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the colour of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal 2) to question by applying torture 3) to torture 4) to vex with grievous pains (of body or mind), to torment 5) to be harassed, distressed 5a) of those who at sea are struggling with a head wind

This first text exemplifies the action of “testing ones mettle” under seriously contrary conditions:

Mark 6:48: (KJV) *And he saw them **toiling** <928> in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.*

Legion fearing the excruciating revealing of true identity would come then from Jesus:

Luke 8:28: (KJV) *When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God most high? I beseech thee, **torment** <928> me not.*

Noah’s anguish-ridden reaction (the test of his mettle) to the overwhelmingly sinful pre-flood world he lived in. It was this attitude that caused him to be chosen of God:

2 Peter 2:8: (KJV) *(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, **vexed** <928> his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds).*

This torment is likened to the pain of a scorpion sting. While this is a physical pain, we also acknowledge the mental anguish (the test of their mettle) upon those who were beaten down:

Revelation 9:5: (KJV) *And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be **tormented** <928> five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.*

Not a physical torment but a mental anguish brought about by false teaching:

Revelation 11:10: (KJV) *And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets **tormented** <928> them that dwelt on the earth.*

The phrase *travailing in birth* directly relates to the physical pain of childbirth.

The word *pained* attaches itself to a woman having their mettle tested—the steep mental challenge of seeing it through:

Revelation 12:2: (KJV) *And she being with child cried, *travailing in birth*, and **pained** <928> to be delivered.*

These last two verses are a final revealing of the mettle (the identity) of those who embrace sin:

Revelation 14:10: (KJV) *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be **tormented** <928> with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:*

Revelation 20:10: (KJV) *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be **tormented** <928> day and night for ever and ever.*

Touchstone: *noun*

1. Referring to the testing of the stone in a sense of its results. This word comes from the previous word in our list which supports the “mettle testing” approach and not a mere torture definition.

Touchstone: Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #929 βασανισμός from 928

The King James Version translates this as “torment” 6 times

Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon: 1) to torture, a testing by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the colour of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal 2) torment, torture 2a) the act of tormenting 2b) the state or condition of those tormented

The first word in this verse *tormented* (#928 see above) was the action of testing followed by *torment* (#929) which shows what that testing was like:

Revelation 9:5: (KJV) *And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their **torment** <929> was as the **torment** <929> of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.*

A result of the test of true identity. Smoke rising indicates that the destruction is over and noting but smoldering remains are left:

Revelation 14:11: (KJV) *And the smoke of their **torment** <929> ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

The judgment upon Babylon, the great spiritual abomination that overran Christianity. Verse 7 pronounces the true identity test. Verses 10 and 15 describe her identity test as severe and final—no one wants to be close:

Revelation 18:7: (KJV) *How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much **torment** <929> and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.*

Revelation 18:10: (KJV) *Standing afar off for the fear of her **torment** <929>, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come.*

Revelation 18:15: (KJV) *The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her **torment** <929>, weeping and wailing.*

Unquenchable Fire

This phrase is used VERY specifically in several Old Testament scriptures. Its meaning was focused on a fire that would burn until its work was unequivocally completed. NO torment; just utter destruction!

Example 1: The desolation of the city of Idumea:

Isaiah 34:8-10: *8 For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion. 9 Its streams will be turned into pitch, and its loose earth into brimstone, and its land will become burning pitch. 10 It will not be quenched night or day; Its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever.*

This text has both literal and prophetic fulfillments. This *unquenchable fire* represented the full and complete judgment of sin. IS THIS FIRE STILL BURNING TODAY? NO torment; just utter destruction!

Example 2: The overthrow of the Jews, and the laying waste of Judea, by Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans:

Ezekiel 20:47-48: *47 And say to the forest of the Negev, Hear the word of the LORD: thus says the Lord GOD, Behold, I am about to kindle a fire in you, and it will consume every green tree in you, as well as every dry tree; the blazing flame will not be quenched and the whole surface from south to north will be burned by it. 48 All flesh will see that I, the LORD, have kindled it; it shall not be quenched.*

IS THIS FIRE STILL BURNING TODAY? NO torment; just utter destruction!

Study QUESTIONS

Ep.1352: What Does “The Smoke of Their Torment Rising Up Forever” Mean?

<https://christianquestions.com/doctrine/1352-smoke-of-their-torment/>

This episode refers to previous parts in the Hellfire Series:

<https://christianquestions.com/category/series/hellfire/>

See:  CQ Rewind
SHOW NOTES

1. What is symbolism? What are the four main symbolic points in Revelation 14:10-11 and 20:10?
2. When is the time period for Revelation 14? What is happening during this time?
 - a. Who is Babylon? What does *fallen, fallen is Babylon* mean here? (verse 8, Acts 20:29)
 - b. What is the warning for true Christians by the third messenger? (verse 9,10, 18:4, 18:21)
 - c. Give the scriptural definition for the word translated *torment*.
3. Give a brief summary of the Parable of the Wheat and Tares. (Matthew 13:24-30,41-43)
 - a. What is the wheat, what are the tares?
 - b. What is the *furnace of fire* the tares get thrown into? (Malachi 4:1, Daniel 12:1)
4. What does the smoke *going up forever and ever* represent? (Revelation 14:11, Isaiah 34:5,8-10)
5. What did the rich man beg from Abraham? (Luke 16:27-2319) How does Abraham’s answer sum up the situation with the Pharisees of Jesus’ day?
 - a. How does this parallel the gospel age experiences? (Revelation 14)
6. When is the time period for Revelation 20:1-14? What is happening during this time?
 - a. List a possible interpretation of the four parts of Satan’s influence and power. (verses 1,2)
 - b. How does the Parable of the Sheep and Goats fit in with verses 7-8? (Matthew 25:32)
 - c. What happens to the devil, beast, false prophet and those who will reject the grace, harmony and peace of God’s kingdom?
7. What is the result of all these seemingly ominous events? (Revelation 21:3-4)
8. Are you associating with God’s people, or are you more comfortable still sitting in “Babylon”? Are your spiritual needs being fulfilled? Do you feel you are where you are supposed to be?