

HEAVEN AND HELL

A **MANNAHOUSE** RESOURCE



INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of time men have wondered what happens to someone after death. Philosophers and religious leaders have offered countless opinions on this subject. The ideas have ranged from reincarnation to simply ceasing to exist at all.

Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Bible, spoke a great deal about the subject. He declared that He himself had come down from heaven (Jn 3:13) and that after His death He would go there to prepare a place for those who would follow him. (Jn 14:2) He also spoke a great deal about a second place that had been prepared for the Devil and his followers. (Matt. 25:41)

This booklet will discuss the clear teachings of the Bible concerning both Heaven and Hell. God has provided clear answers regarding life after death.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title	Pages
What Are Heaven And Hell?	3-4
Does Life Continue After Death?	5
Do Some Souls Cease To Exist?	6
Is There A Purgatory?	7
What Are Heaven And Hell Like?	8-9
Is Reincarnation Real?	10
What Are The Conditions Of Those In Heaven?	11-12
What Are The Conditions Of Those In Hell?	13-14
Who Will Be In Heaven Or Hell?	15-16
How To Go To Heaven Or Hell?	17-18
Summary	19-20

WHAT IS HEAVEN?

Heaven is a term in the Bible which describes three different spheres of existence. The word “heaven” sometimes refers to the atmosphere surrounding the earth. Other times it refers to outer space as the dwelling place of God and those beings who live with Him. This is the heaven we will describe in this booklet. It is the place where those who are not destined for Hell will live after death. In the New Testament scripture it is clearly described as an actual place, and not a state of mind or being.

Other terms used in the Bible to describe Heaven include: The kingdom of God (Eph. 5:5), the Father’s house (John 14:2), a heavenly country (Heb. 11:16), a place of rest from labors (Rev. 14:13), and Paradise (2 Cor. 12:4).

WHAT IS HELL?

There are three Greek words which are translated "Hell" in the King James Bible. One is the Greek word "Tartaroo" which refers to a *place where some angels who have sinned are now confined*. (2 Pet. 2:4) The other words are "Hades" and "Gehenna," which both refer to *the place where souls of the unrighteous go*. Hades is not a permanent place, and one day those souls who are in Hades will be cast into Hell or what is also called "the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14)

The souls in Hades will never enter Heaven, but are destined for eventual consignment to Hell. We will refer in this booklet to the conditions that exist in both Hades and Hell, as both of these places together make up the eternal living quarters for those who are not going to Heaven.

DOES LIFE CONTINUE AFTER DEATH?

The Bible teaches that the life continues after the physical death of the body. God created man with a natural, temporal body and an eternal soul. The soul of man consists of who we really are. It is the center of our mind, will and emotions. Scripture teaches that life is eternal.

“And this is the promise that He (God) has promised us-eternal life.”
(1 John 2:25)

“ . . . eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began.” (Tit. 1 :2)

“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent (our body) is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” (2 Cor. 5: 1)

DO SOME SOULS CEASE TO EXIST?

There are some believe that the souls of those who do not go to Heaven will be annihilated or cease to exist. The Bible clearly indicates that this is not so. The soul is eternal, and will spend eternity either in Heaven or in Hell.

“And the devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever ... And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”
(Rev. 20: 10, 15)

“And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever.”
(Rev. 14:11) *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”* (Matt. 25:46)

IS THERE A PURGATORY?

Some people believe that the soul of man goes to an intermediate place between Heaven and Hell called purgatory. It is believed that in this place the soul goes through a fiery purging to make it pure enough to enter Heaven later on. There is not, however, any evidence of such a place described in the Bible. Purgatory is an idea invented by some men and a place that exists only in imagination.

The Bible does speak of a place called Hades where the souls of those who will not go to Heaven are held until they are finally judged. This Hades however differs greatly from purgatory in that people in Hades will never go to Heaven. (Luke 16:26) It is not a place where people can be delivered from sins, as there is only one method for dealing with sins ever mentioned in the Bible. (1 John 1 :7) The concept of purgatory is not biblical, and those who plan to go there will be severely disappointed.

WHAT IS HEAVEN LIKE?

The Bible refers to Heaven as being above the world, in that God looks down upon the earth, (Deut. 26: 15) and that when Jesus left this earth He was received “up into Heaven” (Mark 16: 19) It is also described as a place where nothing can be corrupted or stolen (Matt. 6:20), where no one dies any more (Luke 20:36), and as a better and everlasting possession (Heb. 10:34). Those living have no hunger, thirst or sorrow. (Rev. 7: 16, 17) It is the place that God has called His throne, where all are in subjection to Him. (Isa. 66: 1)

Heaven is clearly described in the Bible as an actual place. It is not a feeling or a state of mind. When people refer to Heaven as being on earth they are partially correct in that we can experience a personal relationship with God while we are still alive. This is experiencing some of what is in store for those who will go to Heaven when they die.

WHAT IS HELL LIKE?

The Bible speaks a great deal about Hell. It is a place that the devil and demons inhabit. (Matt. 25:41) It is such an awful place to be, that Jesus said it would be better to cut off your hand or gouge out your eye rather than go there. There is crying (Matt. 22: 13) and total darkness in Hell. (Matt. 25:30) It is described as a lake made up of fire and brimstone. (Rev. 21:8) The fire in Hell cannot be put out and causes intense pain and agony. (Matt. 13:50)

It is also true that people can partially experience Hell on earth. Those who live in rebellion against God and His ways do experience to a small degree some of the things that those in Hell are suffering. This experience is however, only a slight foretaste of the miseries that the occupants of Hell experience forever.

IS REINCARNATION REAL?

Nowhere in the Bible is reincarnation taught. The Scripture declares that “it is appointed for men to die once, but after this judgment.” (Heb. 9:27)

Reincarnation teaches that when a person dies, his soul goes to live in a new body that is being born, and that this process repeats itself over and over again. This belief of Hinduism teaches that how we live our life determines the Karmic debt that we must pay off in the next life. The basic idea is that we are stuck on an endless wheel of life, death, and reincarnation until we improve our state through many thousands of lives.

The Bible does agree that men are not good, and that they live under a sin debt. It differs, however, in declaring that grace and forgiveness come through Jesus Christ who has made it possible to be freed from that debt. It also teaches that we only have one life in which to receive the forgiveness of our debt to sin.

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS OF THOSE IN HEAVEN?

THOSE IN HEAVEN ARE IN THE PRESENCE OF JESUS.

"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you ... that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:2-3)

THEY EXPERIENCE GREAT HAPPINESS.

" . . . in Your (God's) PRESENCE is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore." (Ps. 16: 11)

"Blessed (happy) are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:3)

THEY RECEIVE REWARDS THERE.

" . . . for great is your reward in heaven . . . " (Matt. 5: 12)

"If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward." (1 Cor. 3: 14)

“ . . . And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints” (Rev. 11: 18)

“ . . . and you will have treasure in heaven” (Matt. 19:21)

THEY WILL LIVE WITH GOD FOREVER.

“to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.” (I Pet. 1 :4)

“ . . . to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” (I Thess. 4: 1 7)

THE MAJORITY OF MANKIND WILL NOT GO THERE.

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” (Matt. 7:13-14)

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS OF THOSE IN HELL?

THEY EXPERIENCE SEVERE PAIN.

" . . . There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 13: 50)

"And being in torments in Hades . . . " (Luke 16:23)

THEY ARE BURNED WITH FIRE.

"and cast them into the furnace of fire . . . " (Matt. 13:50)

"And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20: 15)

THEY EXPERIENCE GREAT REMORSE.

*" ... remember that in your lifetime you received your good things."
(Luke 16:25)*

Those souls damned to Hell are able to remember what happened during their lifetimes. In the account Jesus gave of an individual in Hades (Luke 16), the man was able to remember what things he owned during his life, as well as the fact that he still had five brothers who had not yet died. He desired to go and warn his five brothers about Hell but was unable to. He also felt much grief over the way he lived while he was on earth.

THE AGONY AND PAIN LASTS FOREVER.

“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’” (Matt. 25:41)

MANY OF THEM ARE SURPRISED THEY WERE SENT TO HELL.

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” (Matt. 7:21-23)

WHO WILL BE IN HEAVEN?

There will be people in Heaven from every nationality and language group. (Rev. 7:9) These will include those the Bible describes as poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3), those who were persecuted for righteousness' sake (Matt. 5:20) and those whose righteousness exceeded the righteousness of the religious leaders of that day. (Matt. 5-20) Those in Heaven are further described as just (Luke 14: 14), as sinners who repented (Luke 15:7), and as those who have done good (John 5:29).

No one in Heaven will deserve to be there as a result of any merit of his own. (Rom. 6:23) Because of this fact there will not be anyone boasting that he or she had earned the right to live in Heaven. (Eph. 2:8-9) The people who live in Heaven will be full of gratitude to God for being allowed to live in His presence eternally.

WHO WILL BE IN HELL?

A great deal of people will be in Hell. They will come from every background, society, religion, and culture. Among their numbers will include those who the Bible describes as:

1. Those who do not know God. (2 Thess. 1 :8)
2. Those who do not obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (2 Thess. 1:8)
3. Those who did not care for the poor and needy. (Matt. 25:45-46)
4. Sinners and hypocrites. (Isa. 33: 14)
5. Those who practiced lawlessness. (Matt. 13:41)
6. Cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sorcerers, sexually immoral, idolaters, and all liars. (Rev. 21 :8)
7. The wicked. (Ps. 9: 17)
8. Homosexuals, adulterers, thieves, covetous people, drunkards, extortioners. (I Cor. 6:9-10)
9. Those who persisted in hatred, contention, jealousy, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, heresies, envy, and partying. (Gal. 5:19-21)

HOW TO GO TO HEAVEN

There is clearly only one way that is available to go to Heaven:

“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’” (John 3:3)

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
(John 3:16)

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” (John 14:6)

“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (John 17:3)

“So they said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.’” (Acts 16:31)

HOW TO GO TO HELL

Below are listed three ways to go to Hell:

1. Not believing in Jesus. (John 3: 18)
2. Once professing faith in Jesus but then turning away, (Heb. 6:6)
3. Indifference to the claims of Jesus. (Matt. 12: 30)

The above three ways can be seen in the following areas:

- A. Making pleasure more important than God. (II Tim. 3:4, I Tim. 5:6)
- B. Loving money more than God.
- C. Trusting false doctrines and prophets.
- D. Believing that being a good person will help save you.
- E. Believing that belonging to a church will save you.
- F. Hypocrisy
- G. Indulging in some special sin.
- H. Procrastination (not turning to God now).

SUMMARY – DON'T CHOOSE HELL

God never meant for you to go to Hell. Hell was prepared originally for the devil and his demons. Jesus not only warned you about Hell, but He died on the cross and paid a tremendous price in suffering to keep you out of Hell. Do not neglect the salvation He offers to you freely. Do not delay to receive His free gift of eternal life, as none of us know when it will be our turn to die. If you make no decision to choose Jesus and Heaven, then in reality, Hell will be your eternal home.

SUMMARY — CHOOSE HEAVEN

Choosing Heaven means choosing to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Such a relationship brings a foretaste of Heaven in this life, and an eternity of happiness. Make your decision for Heaven now by praying a prayer to receive the free gift of eternal life.

“Lord Jesus, I want to receive the gift of eternal life you bought for me when you died on the cross and rose again. In gratitude, I will live my life the way you want me to. Amen.”



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