

in which are listed all those who have come to put their faith in the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. Since they failed to receive God's Son as payment for their sin and rebellion, they were to face eternal punishment.

### RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT

The phrase "...death and Hades gave up the dead..." suggests that the dead physical bodies of the unsaved will be joined with their soul and spirit in Hell to face the punishment of eternal suffering in the "lake of fire." This means that their bodies will be resurrected in order to face eternal punishment.

### THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

*"For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed/receive what he deserves) for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."* (II Corinthians 5:10) *"But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God."*(Romans 14:10) *"Behold, (Jesus) am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done."*(Revelation 22:12)

### THE JUDGMENT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

God's people will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ because they have already had their punishment for sin and rebellion paid for through the atoning death of Jesus Christ. There is no mention of God's people at the Great White Throne Judgment because they already have their names written in the Lamb's book of life and judgment was accomplished for them at the cross. They are God's children, God's family, and they need not tremble before God to see if they will go to Heaven or not. They are already with God in Heaven. However, they will be judged, either rewarded or suffer loss according to the deeds they did as God's children. *"For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire."*(I Corinthians 3:11-15)

### THE RESURRECTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

The Judgment Seat of Christ will take place at the resurrection of God's people, at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.(Luke 14:13,14, Revelation 22:12) *"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with*

*the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall 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, and thus we shall always be with the Lord."* (I Thessalonians 4:16,17) *"...but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed."*(I Corinthians 15:51b,52) The soul and spirit of God's people in Heaven will come with Jesus and be joined with a supernatural, glorified body like that of Jesus. Those of God's people who are still alive when Jesus comes will be instantly changed into this supernatural, glorified state.

### ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?

If you are a Christian, then you have a wonderful eternity in Heaven to look forward to. However, what kind of life are you living as a Christian? Are you living for God so as to receive an eternal reward in Heaven? You will be judged for what you do as a Christian; the values, priorities and faithfulness of your life.

### HEAVEN OR HELL?

You may not be a Christian; yet, the choice remains as to your eternal destiny. God has left the decision up to you. He sent Jesus to pay for your sin and show you how much He loves you. You can right now, by faith, make a choice to let God save you from the judgment against you because of your sin and from the punishment of eternal Hell. You can choose to receive His Son, Jesus Christ, as your Lord and Savior. The following prayer can help you make this important decision:

Dear God, I thank you for loving me and for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for my sin. Forgive me for my sin and rebellion against You. I choose to repent, to turn away from my sin and to stop going my own way. By faith, I put my trust in You to be my Lord and Savior. I surrender my life to You so that You can make me what You want me to be. Come into my life through Your Holy Spirit and make me Your child. I want to know You and experience the life You have planned for me. Thank you, in Jesus name, Amen!

## KNOW THE TRUTH



*"...AND THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE."*

# HEAVEN OR HELL?

## What the Bible Teaches About Heaven and Hell

## Your Eternity Is At Stake The Choice Is Yours

Pastor Lynn Kern

## IS THERE A HEAVEN AND A HELL?

The issue of Heaven and Hell is one of the most explosive and challenging thoughts that a person will face in their life. Death comes to everyone! Is there life beyond the grave? Though other religions have developed beliefs about a heaven and a hell, Jesus Christ conquered death through His resurrection and proved to be the only reliable authority on life after death. As the resurrected Lord and Son of God, Jesus taught that there were only two eternal destinations for mankind: Heaven and Hell. On the authority of Jesus Christ and God's word contained in the Bible, you can be sure that there is a Heaven and a Hell.

### WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT HEAVEN:

*"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great..."* (Matthew 5:12) *"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal..."* (Matthew 6:20) *"Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"* (Matthew 25:34, kingdom refers to heaven) *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16, everlasting life refers to heaven) *"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."* (John 14:2,3, dwelling places refers to heaven)

### WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT HELL:

*"And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell."* (Matthew 5:29) *"And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."* (Matthew 10:28) *"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.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."* (Matthew 25:41,46, hell is referred to as eternal fire and punishment)

### WHAT IS HEAVEN LIKE?

The Bible describes Heaven in a number of ways. *"Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; ..."* (Revelation 21:3,4) *"And there shall no longer be any night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp*

*nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever."* (Revelation 22:5)

God's presence will be powerfully real and evident to His people. There will be no evil, suffering, or emotional pain in Heaven. It is possible from the above scripture that the glory of God's presence and Heaven itself will overwhelm and replace the hurtful memory of the past. It also says that God's people will rule(reign) for eternity, which probably refers to kingdoms in the universe and the heavenly realm. As Jesus said in Matthew 5:12, Heaven will be a place of rewards, eternal blessings for those who served God faithfully in this life. The Apostle Peter says that believers are to *"...obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you."* (1 Peter 1:4) Inheritance is the blessings and position one will receive in Heaven. Another picture of Heaven shows God's people worshipping and serving God. (Revelation 7:9-15) Though Heaven is not described in detail, nor is there a detailed description of what God's people will be doing, it is clear from the scripture that it is a wonderful place that God has provided for His people to spend eternity. It is far more awesome and spectacular than anything mankind could dream of. God's Heaven is an everlasting place of blessing and fellowship with His people, the place where complete spiritual fulfillment will take place.

### WHAT IS HELL LIKE?

In the Bible, the word "hell" is most often used to describe the place of waiting for those who have died and are awaiting to be judged. The Old Testament word "Sheol" and the New Testament word "Hades" delineate hell as the place where the dead go until the Judgment. It has been used in scripture to refer to the grave or a garbage dump. A few of the references to hell describe this place of waiting as one of torment and suffering. In other words, those who have died without personal faith in God are presently suffering torment as they await their final judgment before God.

### "HELL FIRE"

Hell is often used to describe the place where a person will burn in eternal fire forever. The actual scriptural description is found in Revelation 20:15b *"And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."* The "lake of fire" gives the view of eternal flames and torment that has so often been associated with Hell.

### A PICTURE OF HELL IN A PARABLE

Jesus told the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, found in Luke 16:19-31. The parable or story suggests that Hell was a place that had two parts: one place for

those who had put their faith in God and one place for those who did not. These two parts were separated by a "Grand Canyon" type chasm, so that those in one part could not cross over to the other. Lazarus was a man of God and was in the place where God's people were, the place Jesus described as "Abraham's bosom." Jesus also referred to this place as "Paradise" (Luke 24:43). It is believed that when Jesus arose from the dead and ascended into Heaven, He brought all His people, from Adam to the thief on the cross, with Him to Heaven. Those righteous people were held captive until Jesus came and captured them and took them to Heaven. (Ephesians 4:8-10) Since Christ's resurrection and ascension, there is no longer two parts. Those who die as Christians will go to Heaven and those who die without Christ will go to Hell, the place of torment before judgment.

### THE DEAD: SOUL AND SPIRIT

It is important to understand that when a person dies, the body is put in the ground or is destroyed in some manner, but the soul and spirit of that person lives on. Either the soul and spirit of a person awaits judgment in Hell or is in the presence of God in Heaven.

### THE JUDGMENT!

The Judgment plays an important part in understanding Heaven and Hell. God is a just and fair God. He will execute just and fair judgment before sending anyone to Hell. There are two judgments named in the final judgment: The Great White Throne Judgment and the Judgment Seat of Christ.

### THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

*"And I saw the dead, the great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades(hell) gave up one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades(hell) were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."* (Revelation 20:12-15)

### THE BASIS FOR ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

The books that are opened give an account of what people did according to their deeds. There will probably be good deeds, as well as bad deeds listed. Many may have been very good people in their earthly life, while others were very evil. Yet, they all had one thing in common, their name was not written in the book of life. This book of life refers to the *"...book of life of the Lamb"* (Revelation 13:8)