

# Light for My Path Youth Bible Studies

## #19: What and Where is Hell?

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In our last lessons we studied about what happens to a person when he dies. Those who accept Jesus as their Saviour and obey Him, are waiting in their graves until He comes back to awaken them at the resurrection.

There are many, however, who pay no attention to what the Bible teaches; they will not listen to Jesus; they refuse to obey His commandments. It is impossible for Jesus to take them to heaven in their sins. What will become of them? In looking for the answer to this question, we need to know exactly what the Bible teaches. Only God can give us the true answer.



1. Who first promised man that he could disobey God and never die? **Genesis 3:3-5.**

"But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Note: This is the only text in the Bible that promises man that he can disobey God and have eternal life. It is the world's oldest lie!

2. Who was really speaking through the serpent? **Revelation 12:9.**

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

3. What did Jesus say Satan is? **John 8:44.**

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

Note: We need to remember who it was that was speaking to Eve, promising her that she could disobey God and continue to live. God says Satan is a liar.

4. What two resurrections did Jesus say there would be? **John 5:28, 29.**

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

## How Many Are Now in Hell?

5. In what direction are most people traveling? **Matthew 7:13, 14.**

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Note: How sad it is that there are far more wicked people in the world than there are good people. All who refuse to follow the right way will be lost. Those who are not willing to live according to God's laws here, would be most unhappy in heaven. They would be wanting to wreck things, steal and kill and so on.

Many religions of the world teach that when a wicked person dies he goes immediately to a place called "hell." where he is tormented with fire forever. Many heathen religions have taught this for centuries. Several hundred years ago this false teaching came into the Christian church.

Others argue that a good God would not torture someone forever because of a few years of wrong living. They believe that there really is no hell, and that this is just God's way of threatening people to make them do what is right. If this was so, then God would be a liar like Satan. But, the question is, what does the whole Bible teach?

6. What reward does sin bring? **Romans 6:23.**

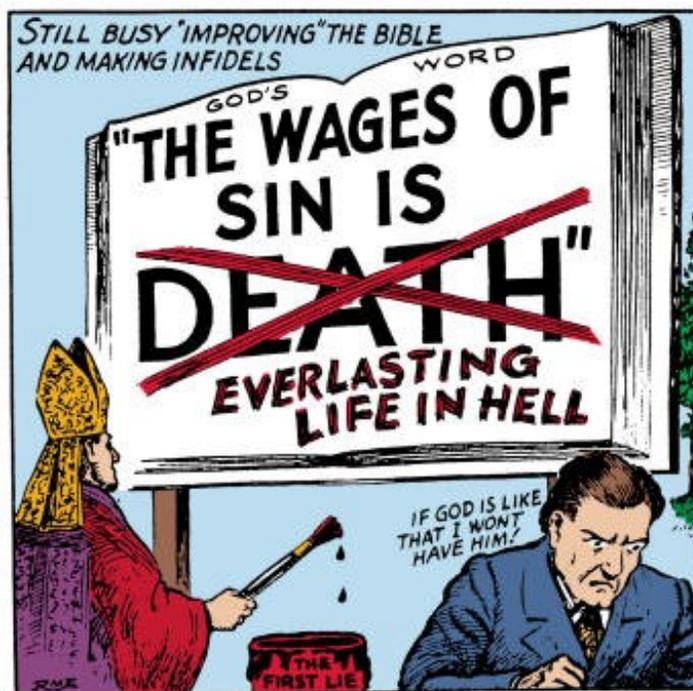
"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Note: The only definition we have of death is 'not alive'. The wages of sin is death-not life. If, as many people believe, the dead live forever in hell fire, then they would really have eternal life too, just as do the righteous. The difference would be that the righteous live in peace and happiness, while the wicked suffer.

7. When does Jesus say all men will receive their reward? **Matthew 16:27.**

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

Note: This verse, like our memory verse, tells us that none will receive his reward until Jesus comes with all His angels. Therefore the wicked are not now in hell.



8. Where did He say those who have done evil are now, while they await the resurrection? **John 5:28, 29.**

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Note: What would be the need of calling the wicked from their graves in the resurrection day if they were already in hell? Why should they come up for judgment if they were already suffering in hell for hundreds of years? That would be very unfair.

Jesus teaches that the wicked sleep in their graves until the resurrection day, when they will come forth to receive their punishment. They are not now suffering in hell!

9. For whom was the fire of destruction originally prepared? **Matthew 25:41.**

"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."

10. When will Satan and his angels receive their punishment? **Jude 6.**

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

11. What is this death called? **Revelation 20:14, 15.**

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Note: No sin defiled heart can enter heaven. It was sin that nailed Jesus to the cross. You won't hold on to it, will you? Let Jesus free you from sin and write your name in the book of Life.

12. To what are the wicked compared? **Malachi 4:1.**

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."

Note: Stubble is what is left in the field after the grain has been harvested. It is very dry and burns very hot and very quickly.

13. When the fire has completed its work, what will be left? **Malachi 4:3.**

"And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts."

Note: Matthew 10:28 speaks of this judgment as one which destroys both body and soul.

14. To what did Jesus compare the wicked? **Matthew 13:38.**

"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares [weeds] are the children of the wicked one."

15. What happens to the tares? **Matthew 13:40.**

"As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."

16. When does this take place? **Matthew 13:40-42.**

"As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Note: How nicely this goes along with the statement of Jesus in Matthew 11:22 where He speaks of a day of judgment as a future event. How unfair to think that a person is being punished before he has been judged!

17. Where will the fire burn the wicked? **Revelation 20:9.**

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."

Note: Peter tells us: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3:7.

#### Difficult Texts Explained

You may ask, "But do not some texts speak of eternal torment which will last forever, of eternal fire, and unquenchable fire?" Yes, there are those texts, but let's look at some other Bible texts and see if they will help us understand the way the Bible uses these words.

18. Under certain circumstances, how long was a Hebrew servant to serve his master?  
**Exodus 21:6.**

"Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever."

Note: Clearly, in this case, the term "forever" means as long as the servant lived, and no longer.

19. For how long a period of time did Samuel's mother indicate he was to serve the Lord in Shiloh? **1 Samuel 1:22.**

"But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever."

20. For how long did she intend he was to serve the Lord? **1 Samuel 1:28.**

"Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there."

Note: In order to understand the meaning of these terms, we have to look at other texts that use the same words or phrases. The term forever was as long as Samuel lived. In both the Old and New Testaments, the term forever is used more than fifty times with reference to something that has already come to an end.

21. How long did Jonah say he was in the fish? **Jonah 2:6.**

"I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God."

Note: In the case of Jonah, the term "forever" was an even shorter period of time than it was in the other texts we have just looked at.

22. How long was Jonah really in the fish? **Jonah 1:17.**

"Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."

23. What word is used to describe the fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah? **Jude 7.**

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

Note: If you will go back and read verse 6 also, you will see that the writer is comparing the fires that destroyed these wicked cities with the fire of the last days that will destroy the wicked.

24. What was left when this fire had completed its work? **2 Peter 2:6.**

"And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly."

Note: Peter tells us that when the fire had completed its work, nothing was left but ashes. Remember that this was exactly what Malachi 4:3 said would be left of the wicked after the fire of destruction in the last day had done its work.

25. What did God say about the fire that would burn Jerusalem if the people continued to rebel and disobey His commandments? **Jeremiah 17:27.**

"But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched."

Note: A number of years later, because the people continued to disobey God, King Nebuchadnezzar came against the city and burned it with fire. See 2 Chronicles 36:19. Even though God had said the fire would be unquenchable, we know that this fire is not still burning today. When God said, through the prophet Jeremiah, that the fire would be unquenchable, He meant that no man would be able to put it out until it had done its appointed work of destroying the city.

## A God of Love

26. How does God feel about the death of the wicked? Ezekiel 33:11.

"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?"

27. What is this work of God destroying sinners called? **Isaiah 28:21.**

"For the LORD shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act."

Note: The terrible work of destroying the lost is a "strange act" for Jesus to do. His whole life was spent and sacrificed in trying to help save men. It will be a fearful, heart-breaking time when Jesus at last comes to do "His act, His strange act" of destroying those who have rejected His pleadings and for whom He gave His life.

### The Complete End of Sin

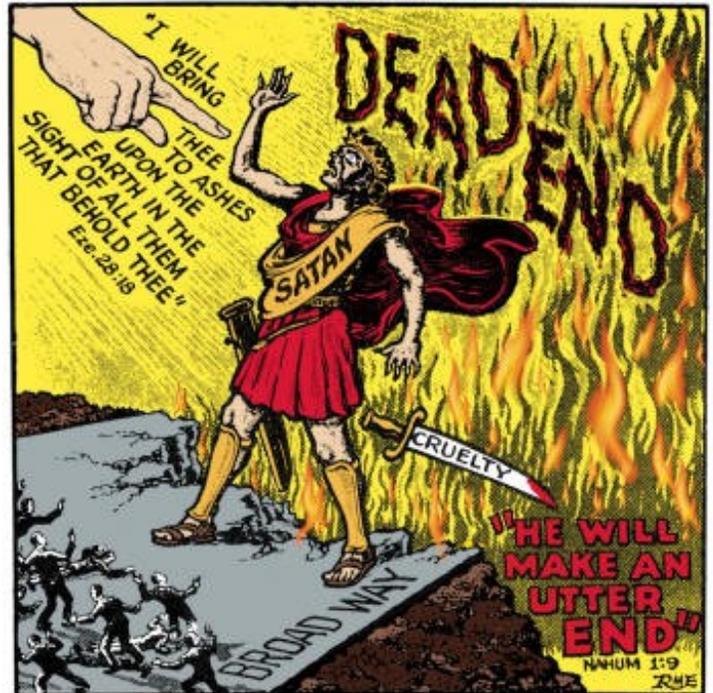
28. How will God bring to an end our memory of the sad past? **Revelation 21:4.**

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Note: How kind God is! In Isaiah 65:17 we read: "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." There will be a complete end to the suffering of the lost. Everything in the new earth will be so wonderful that sadness and sorrow will not even be thought about any more.

Remember that not one person will be lost unless he has rejected the opportunity to be saved. Jesus will save all who will accept Him as their Saviour. Those who knowingly cling to sin must pay the penalty, the second death.

God will soon set fire to the horrible rubbish pile of sin in this old world. He is going to clean the universe of the very memory of sin. Sin will be destroyed wherever it is found. In mercy Jesus pleads with you to forsake sin so that you will be able to live in the new earth forever, where no sin or sorrow will ever come.



Jesus wants to save you. He cannot bear to think of even one soul being lost. Will you say, "Jesus, I surrender all"?

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