

QUESTION: Where in the Bible does it say that the deadline for accepting Christ is at death? Is there any chance to be saved after a person has died?

ANSWER: There are NO second chances after death. I don't know ALL the places in the Bible where it teaches that **in this life only** do we have an opportunity to be saved, but I do know of four Scriptures. The first one is Hebrews 9:27, the second one is Luke 16:19-31, the third one is John 8:21-24, and the fourth is John 5:28-29.

1.) Hebrews 9:27 "And as it is appointed for men **to DIE once, but AFTER this the JUDGMENT.**" This shows the natural sequence or order of things according to how God has made them: first you die, and only once (this also shoots down reincarnation), and the next event on the calendar is the judgment. In fact, Hebrews 10:27 calls it "a certain fearful expectation of judgment" - there is no mention of a second chance, or an alternate route. It's "Go directly to jail - do not pass GO - do not collect \$200"!

2.) Luke 16:19-31 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously (ate well) every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that **the beggar died, and was carried by the ANGELS into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in TORMENTS in HADES,** he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham **afar off**, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am TORMENTED in this FLAME.' But Abraham said, '**Son, remember that IN YOUR LIFETIME** you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but **now he is comforted and you are tormented.** And besides all this, **between us and you there is a GREAT GULF fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.** Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'" Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, '**If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.**'"

Jesus made it very clear in His story of the rich man and Lazarus the beggar, that both the righteous dead and the unrighteous dead are fully conscious after death, even though their bodies were buried in the grave, and that there was NO "second chance" for the rich man to be saved (Abraham tells him that **"in your lifetime"** he had his chance). Jesus does NOT say that this is a parable, but instead says, "a certain rich man" and "a certain" beggar, even giving his name, Lazarus, to indicate that these are actual people. We see that the unsaved man went directly to Hades, a place of torment, and the saved man, Lazarus, went directly to a place of comfort, "Abraham's Bosom." We see that the unsaved man was concerned for his family still alive on earth, and Abraham tells him that his family must believe God's word ("Moses and the prophets"), and that's all the chance they will get either.

- **Psalm 28:1** "To You I will cry, O Lord my Rock; do not be silent to me, lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who **go DOWN to the pit.**"
- **Psalm 49:15-17** "But God will redeem **my SOUL from the power of Sheol**, for He shall receive me. Do not be afraid when one becomes rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for **when he dies** he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not **DESCEND** after him."
- **Psalm 55:15** "Let death seize them; let them **go DOWN alive into Sheol**, for wickedness is in their dwellings and among them."

- **Psalm 63:9** "But those who seek my life, to destroy it, shall go into **the LOWER PARTS of the earth.**"
- **Ephesians 4:8-10** "Therefore He says, '**When He ascended on high**, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.' (Now this, 'He ascended' - what does it mean but that He also first **DESCENDED** into **the lower parts of the earth**? He who descended is also the One who **ascended** far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)"
- **John 20:17** "Jesus said to her, 'Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, '**I am ascending to My Father** and your Father, and to My God and your God.'"
- **Matthew 12:40** "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man (Jesus) be **three days and three nights** in the **HEART** of the earth."
- **Psalm 16:10** "For You will not leave **my soul in Sheol**, nor will You allow Your Holy One (Christ) to see corruption (decay)."

We see from these verses that Hades (in Hebrew, it is called Sheol) is below, in the lower parts of the earth. We see that Jesus said He would be there "in the **HEART** of the earth" for three days and three nights, and He cannot mean in His tomb, because His tomb was carved out of rock in the side of a hill, ABOVE the ground. His body was in the tomb for three days, but **His spirit went into Hades** to preach to the souls/spirits there who were "in prison" (see I Peter 3:19-20), and to release the souls of all the Believers (He led "captivity" - the captive spirits), and take them up to heaven when He ascended to the Father. David prophesied in Psalm 16:10 that **his soul would not be left in Sheol**, and he also prophesied of the resurrection of Jesus when he said that God would not leave His Holy One, the Messiah, to decay in the grave.

WARNING! - Do not think that any of this is teaching that there is a Purgatory! When a person dies their soul/spirit goes immediately to one place or the other, depending on whether they have believed in God's only begotten Son and Savior, Jesus Christ. Purgatory does not exist, but is a man-made teaching of the Roman Catholic religion, and it teaches that there is a second chance after death. The doctrine of Purgatory was invented by one of the Popes in order to make more money and keep people in bondage to the Roman Catholic religion, because it teaches that by giving money or buying "masses" one can gradually get a person out of Purgatory and into heaven. The Bible says in Hebrews 9:27 "it is appointed for men **to DIE once**, but after this **the JUDGMENT.**" There are NO second chances after death.

IN SUMMARY: There are actually two places referred to as "hell" in the Bible: Hades and the Lake of Fire.

Hades (Sheol) -

Location - in the center of the earth; consists of two parts: 1. "Abraham's Bosom", a place of comfort for Believers; and 2. The Place of the Unrighteous Dead, which is a place of torment for the unbelievers.

Occupants - 1. In "Abraham's Bosom" - none, it has been emptied out; all Believers go directly to heaven now. 2. In the Place of the Unrighteous Dead - All the souls/spirits of the unsaved. They are awaiting the resurrection of their bodies, after which they will stand before the Lord Jesus Christ at the Great White Throne Judgment "and anyone who is NOT found written in the BOOK of LIFE will be cast into the LAKE of FIRE" (Revelation 20:11-15).

The Lake of Fire -

Location - unknown, possibly "outer space"

Occupants - no one is there now; Satan, his demons, and all the unsaved will be there for all eternity, but not until AFTER the Great White Throne Judgment.

Revelation 20:10, "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 TORTURED** day and night FOREVER and EVER."

3.) John 8:21-24 "Then Jesus said to them again, "I am going away, and **you will seek Me, and will DIE in your SIN**. Where I go you cannot come." "And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am NOT of this world. Therefore I said to you that **you will DIE in your SINS**; for **if you do not believe that I am He, you will DIE in your SINS**."

If you do NOT take advantage of the FORGIVENESS through the NAME of JESUS, you must PAY for your own sins. If you do not believe in **the death of Jesus on the cross (the BLOOD of Jesus)** to cleanse you from all your sins, then you have NO WAY to be cleansed or forgiven, and **you will go to your DEATH still in your filthy, SINFUL CONDITION**. Hebrews 10:26 says "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" for anyone who REJECTS the SACRIFICE of JESUS on the CROSS! The fact that Jesus says TWICE "**you will DIE in your SINS**" makes it obvious that DEATH is the cutting off point for "the day of salvation."

- **II Corinthians 6:2** ".....Behold, **now** is 'the acceptable time,' behold, **now** is 'the day of salvation.'"
- **Hebrews 3:15** "**TODAY** if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me."

4.) John 5:28-29 "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which **ALL who are in the GRAVES** will hear His voice and come forth - those who have done good, to **the RESURRECTION of LIFE**, and those who have done evil, to **the resurrection of CONDEMNATION**."

- **Daniel 12:1b-2** ".....and at that time your people, **everyone who is found written in the Book**, will be rescued. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt (condemnation)."

Definition: "Those who SLEEP in the DUST of the EARTH" - This means **those who are PHYSICALLY DEAD** and their bodies are in the grave, buried in the ground. The Bible often refers to death as "sleep" and the dead as "being asleep," **but it is NEVER a SOUL SLEEP**. Only **the physical BODY is "asleep"** and waiting to be AWAKENED at the resurrection. The SOULS of the people have already LEFT their BODIES to either be with God, if they were saved, or for the UNSAVED, to await the JUDGMENT and be thrown into hell. For the believer in Jesus Christ "**to be ABSENT from the BODY**" is "**to be PRESENT with the Lord**". We also see from these Scriptures that the TIME FRAME is BEFORE they are in the graves, because they will be judged for what they did in this life. When we accept Christ and are saved, our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, which there again, is the BOOK of what? The book of LIFE! We have all of THIS LIFE in which to be sure our names are written in that book. II Corinthians 5:10 says that "we must ALL appear before the JUDGMENT SEAT of Christ, that each one may receive [rewards or judgment for] the things DONE in the BODY." Our time frame in which we will be judged, whether Believers or non-believers, is while we are "in the body" - our physical body and life here on earth.

- **II Corinthians 5:6 & 8** "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home **in the BODY**, we are absent from the Lord." "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be **ABSENT from the BODY** and to **be PRESENT with the Lord**."

Definition: "THOSE WHO HAVE DONE GOOD" - Wait a minute! I thought salvation was by **GRACE through FAITH**, and NOT of WORKS? **What is "GOOD" in the sight of God**, and what is it that **we MUST DO to be SAVED** and have a part in the

RESURRECTION to LIFE? **The only "good work"** that we can do to obtain salvation is **the "work" of BELIEVING in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.**

- **Acts 16:30-31** "And he brought them out and said, 'Sirs, **what must I DO to be Saved?** So they said, 'BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.....'"
- **John 6:28-29** "Then they said to Him, '**What shall we DO,** that we may WORK the WORKS of God?' Jesus answered and said to them, '**This is the WORK** of (that is pleasing to) God, that you BELIEVE in Him whom He sent.'"
- **Romans 16:25-26** "Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic scriptures has been made manifest to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, **for OBEDIENCE to the FAITH.**"

Now, when do these TWO RESURRECTIONS occur, the **RESURRECTION of LIFE for BELIEVERS** in Jesus Christ and the **RESURRECTION of CONDEMNATION for NON-BELIEVERS**? The Resurrection for Believers takes place at several different times; it is one resurrection, but it happens in several stages. **Stage 1.)** The Old Testament saints such as Moses, Abraham, David, Elijah, and of course many whose names we do not know, were raised immediately following Jesus's own resurrection (see Matthew 27:51-53). **Stage 2.)** The next phase will be for the Body of Christ. Those who have **DIED believing in Christ** will be resurrected first, and the living Believers will be changed into their resurrection bodies instantly, at the "Rapture" (See I Thessalonians 4:13-18, I Corinthians 15:50-54). This will happen immediately BEFORE the seven years of Great Tribulation. **Stage 3.)** The next phase will be the Tribulation Believers (see Rev. 20:4-5), immediately AFTER the seven years of Great Tribulation and BEFORE the thousand year reign of Christ. After our resurrection, we as Believers in Christ must appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, in order to be judged on our works. This judgment for Believers, however, is ONLY to see whether we will receive rewards or not. **Remember, the Believer's judgment for SIN has already fallen on Jesus Christ,** Jesus has already taken our punishment, and we will not have to suffer the wrath of God (see II Cor. 5:18-21, I Thess. 5:9, I Thess. 1:10, and Isaiah 53:5-6 & 10-12).

- **II Corinthians 5:10** "For we must **ALL** appear before **the JUDGMENT SEAT of Christ,** that each one may receive [*rewards or judgment for*] the things DONE in the BODY, according to what he has DONE, whether GOOD or BAD."

The **RESURRECTION of CONDEMNATION** will take place immediately after the thousand years are over (Rev. 20:5) and is **for unbelievers only.** This is also referred to as "The Great White Throne Judgment" (see Rev. 20:11). They will then be **judged on the basis of their WORKS** and their **WORKS will NOT be enough to save them.** Because they have REJECTED CHRIST and His atonement, they must bear their own punishment for their sins, and they will be thrown into the lake of fire (also called "The Second Death" - see Rev. 20:12-14, Rev. 21:8).

- **Revelation 20:11-15** "I saw a great white THRONE and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and **books were opened.** And another book was opened, which is **the Book of Life.** And the dead were **judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.** The sea gave up the dead [*bodies*] who were in it, and Death (the grave) and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were JUDGED, each one according to his works. Then death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death. And anyone who was NOT found written in **the BOOK of LIFE** was cast into the LAKE of FIRE."