



## **“The Seven States of Man”**

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***If someone asks you, “What really happens to me when I die?” What would you say that you know you can back up from the teachings of God?***

**There are other important questions we want to know:**

- Do the dead know anything? Are they conscious?
- Will babies go to hell if they are not baptized? Babies are only sprinkled, does that count?
- Are **HELL** and **HADES** the same place?
- Do we enter **Heaven** right after death, or wait until the judgment day?

These and many other such questions can be answered by a study of the Bible regarding the seven states of man. These are the 7 possibilities within life and the afterlife.

**THE FIRST STATE OF MAN – INNOCENCE** (We were created in the image of God and therefore we had to begin our existence without sin or even a blemish. We enter this world as pure as our Creator.)

1. This state includes infants and mentally retarded people, those without the ability to make choices on right and wrong. Nearly 50% of the world's population dies in this state.
2. Infants are **NOT** born condemned because of the sin of Adam and Eve as some people teach:
  - a. **Read Romans 5:18-20.** Adam brought sin and death into the world. It was man's creation and therefore affects all mankind. We like Adam enter the state of sin when we make the first trespass against God, just like Adam and Eve did. There is no set age when God says this takes place. When we can determine right from wrong, develop our own free will, then we make that choice and everyone makes it at some point early in life.
  - b. **Read Ezekiel 18:19-20.** Does this passage suggest that children are already in sin because of their parents or because of Adam? (*No*)
  - c. **Read Matthew 19:13-14.** How does Jesus use the little children as an example? What does this teaching of Jesus imply about the salvation of these children brought to Jesus? (*Jesus seems to point out their innocence and teach that this complete trust in the Lord is what leads us to the kingdom of heaven. Their purity of heart and trust is what God expects in us if we ever want to see heaven. It seems to imply they were in a state of innocence, just like Adam and Eve in the Garden before they rebelled.*)

- d. **Read Matthew 18:1-10.** How serious is God about protecting the little children from stumbling, becoming an unbeliever at some point? (*This would be true of a child or even someone who is a child in their faith, a recent convert.*)
- e. What does Jesus say about the angels who are watching over these children? (*Their angels behold God's face always. In the Hebrew thought, the idea that guardian angels were present was a sign that we were in a covenant relationship with God. That would mean that Jesus was again stating these children were not under condemnation, but pure and innocent. Adam and Eve were in a state of innocence until they used the free will God was giving them to disobey Him and chose to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. When they knew the choice was wrong and did it anyway, they left their first state, the state of innocence that begins at birth. These children have not yet made that decision.*)

3. There is no example of any infant being baptized in all of the New Testament record, which is our training manual for truth.

- a. **Read 2 Sam. 12:21-23.** Apparently we may, like King David, expect to join our departed little ones in the blessed world to come. At death the infant departs into **Paradise**.
- b. There is no record of a child going to **LIMBO**. **Limbo** was a German word used during the medieval times to create a place where children or mentally handicapped could go. It was easier to create a new place than wrestle with the infant who were not baptized and died with the sin of Adam and Eve on their soul, another false teaching that emerged in the church.

4. **Read Mark 16:15-16.** What were the key components mentioned for those who responded to salvation? (*They believed and were baptized based upon the preaching of the Gospel and their understanding. Therefore, how could an infant or toddler be held accountable when it is impossible for them to read about, hear about or understand the sacrifice of Christ?*)

5. **Read Rom. 3:21-23.** All of those who do not die before they grow up commit sin. They enter into the **WORLD**.

6. **Read Psalm 25:7.** There are no child conversions too young to have escaped sin. Either a child goes to be with the Lord when he is in a state of innocence, too young to understand the Gospel, or he reaches an age when he enters the world. They must go into the world before they go into the church. What does that tell you about the need for powerful youth programs and youth sponsors, workers in the church? What does that tell you about the need for a strong family witness for Christ and family devotions? The Bible offers no teaching on an infant moving directly into the church because mom and dad and good parents stood up for them. God protects them in this state of innocence until their free will becomes a guiding force. Jesus shows us that God loves the little children and cares for them.

## THE SECOND STATE OF MAN - **THE WORLD**

1. The "**world**" refers to all men who have not been saved from their sins.
  - a. **Read 1 John 5:19.** Who is in control of this world? (*"The whole world is under the control of the evil one". Notice that this awareness of who runs the choices of this world is part of the knowledge that leads us to be born of God and leave the allegiance to this world behind.*)
  - b. **Read Matthew 7:13-14.** How is the gate into the world we enter from innocence by our choice easy to get through and like driving in the middle of a 8 lane express way? (*It is the "broad way" of life, somewhat like the autobahn in Europe where there is no speed limit. We love having no rules, so it is attractive and easy to just fall in with the traffic and start moving without thinking. It is the way most people are taking, the way that leads to destruction.*)

- c. **Read Acts 10:1-2.** What can you tell me about Cornelius and his family? (*They were Romans who had accepted Jehovah God and became deeply devoted. They were proselyte Jews, those not Jewish but became faithful alongside the Jews to God. He had been such a man of God that he was caring for the poor, giving generously, God-fearing and a man of prayer. Yet, being good, even great wasn't good enough. He still needed to accept Jesus as Lord.*)
- d. The world is populated with sinners, both those who are defiant rebels against God and their followers, and those like Cornelius who are very respectable, deeply religious. Good old boys and girls still need Jesus Christ to be their Savior. No one is good enough to walk into the presence of God. Both classes need to be saved.
- e. **Read Acts 11:11-14.** Peter is trying to explain why in the world he has preached to and baptized Cornelius and his family. God wants all people, all races on earth to come to Him through His anointed One, Jesus, and the Savior of the world. No one can leave the World and enter the Church without the message being taken to them.

2. **Read Luke 16:19-24.** At death sinners like the rich man leave the world and enter into a place of *torment* and separation from the righteous.

- a. **Read 2 Peter 2:9.** What does God do to the unrighteous who leave this world and how does this relate to the rich man in Jesus' story? (*hold them for judgment while continuing their punishment. Many people feel like nothing really matters because when you're dead everything is over. The Bible says differently. We should fear dying without Christ as Lord. This should create a passion in every one of us for evangelism and for leading our families to walk closely with the Lord.*)
- b. **Read 1 Peter 3:19-20.** Who does it say Jesus preached in the Holy Spirit to after His resurrection? (*To the spirits in prison who disobeyed in the days of the flood. This may have meant the angels who rebelled in heaven that have created this spirit of rebellion or those who refused to believe Noah for 120 years. Whichever it means, the are in a temporary prison. The word for prison is **PHYLAKE** which was the Greek word for a prison or a place where people are under guard. Jesus does not proclaim the Gospel. The word for preached **KERRYSSO** means to proclaim victory, herald a triumph, not to preach the gospel. So, here is another reference to a temporary unseen world that exists until the judgment. We'll explore this more later.*)

3. **Read Rev. 22:17.** Who is invited to leave the World and come to Jesus and to His Spirit? (*Thanks be to God, whosoever wants to know God may forsake the world.*)

4. **Read Galatians 1:3-5.** We come to Jesus by the way of the cross

5. **Read Colossians 1:19-20.** We enter into the **CHURCH** by way of the cross.

6. **Read Acts 16:29-35.** We come into the church by belief in God's teaching and obedience to it.

7. **Read Acts 2:38-41.** We come into the church by repentance and baptism.

## The Third State of Man - **THE CHURCH: A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS**

1. The **church** is the full number of all saved people, whom God adds to His kingdom.
  - a. **Read Acts 2:46-47.** What do we see about the closeness of the church?
  - b. **Read Colossians 1:13.** Christ alone knows their names. We are scattered across the world joined as one in Jesus' kingdom. The names of all who belong to Jesus are in the Lamb's Book of Life. The **church** is not a building; it is a fellowship of believers joined by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Together people around the world join to form God's building, which is known as the church, or the "called out assembly." We are called out of the world to be joined together with God.
2. The **church** is a place of safety, joy, and growth
  - a. **Read 1 Peter 1:8.** The church creates a peace within us. How?
  - b. **Read Jude 24-25.** How does Jesus keep us safe?
  - c. **Read 2 Peter 3:18.** What command does the Holy Spirit give to believers that are part of the church?
3. **Read Hebrews 3:14-15.** What condition does God give for sharing in Christ? (*Men must not fail to keep the beginning of their confidence in Christ firmly to the end of life.*)
4. **Read Hebrews 3:12-13.** How does God tell us to keep from developing a hardened heart? (*Be part of a church body that is continually encouraging one another's faith.*)
5. **Read 2 Pet 2:20-22.** How would a person who has accepted Christ as Lord and then later rejected Him as Lord be in a condition that is worse than their former condition? It could be illustrated by drawing a chart showing a sort of "back door" from the **church** back into **the world**.
6. At death the Christian leaves this **world** to go to **Paradise** "to be with the Lord."

## THE FOURTH STATE OF MAN - **PARADISE WITH OUR LORD**

1. **Paradise** is simply a name for heaven, where God and Christ are.
  - a. **Read Revelation 2:7**
  - b. **Read 2 Corinthians 12:4**
  - c. **Read Luke 3:43.**
2. In **Paradise** the child of God is "at home with the Lord"
  - a. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:6,8**
  - b. **Read Philippians 1:23.** It is far better than this life. There we may be in "*Abraham's bosom*" (Luke 16:22).

- c. **Read Acts 7:59.** and with the Lord and Stephen.
- d. **Read Revelation 6:9-11.** It is a time of waiting, but of rest also.
- e. Note that the dead are conscious.

3. **Paradise** is a word, not in the Greek language, but borrowed from the Persians, and added to the Greek. The word was used to describe a walled-garden belonging to the king. The king would ask only certain privileged people to walk with him in paradise. One day we will walk with the King of kings in the Garden of God.

4. Adam was in **Paradise**. (Genesis 2:15) The Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Old Testament. It uses the word **paradise** in the following passages.

5. God walked in **Paradise**. (Genesis 3:8) Was God in heaven at the times He was not with Adam, or simply out of sight?

6. The tree of life was in **Paradise**. (Genesis 2:9) But man was driven from this dwelling because he had allowed sin to enter into God's perfect garden. (Genesis 1:31; 3:17)

7. The tree of life will be in **Paradise**. (Revelation 2:7) He who overcomes will enter this perfect garden and eat of the tree of life.

8. There was a temporary place for martyrs for Christ. (Rev. 6:9-11)

9. There will be a tree of life in the New Heaven and New Earth. (Revelation 22:1-3, 14) Heaven and earth will pass away and a new one will come down, which will have the tree of life in it. (Matthew 24:35. Revelation 21:1)

10. **Heaven** is a subject that covers a lot of area. The old will give way to the new. (Isaiah 66:17.22) We see that the **new Heaven and Earth** will endure and so will we live forever.

11. **Heaven** was a term used to mean numerous ideas:

- a. Anything outside of earth.
- b. The place where God dwelled. (I Kings 8:27. Psalms 113:5-6)
- c. The sky.
- d. The firmament, which God used to separate the waters above from the waters below. Many believe that heaven is above the firmament.
- e. The Greek word **OURANOS** was used 284 times in the New Testament and translated as air, sky, or heaven. (See Geo. V. Wigram's, Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament.)
- f. Jesus saw the heavens open up. (Mark 1:10)
- g. Stephen saw the heavens open up. (Acts 7:56)
- h. Peter saw the heavens open up. (Acts 10:11)

12. All heaven could not contain Yahweh. We cannot limit the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit to one place. God can be both in heaven and on earth at the same time. Likewise Jesus could be both in Paradise and working on the New Heaven

and New Earth at the same time.

13. Are **Paradise** and **Heaven** the same place? It seems that there might have been a reason that this word “Paradise” was only used 3 times in the New Testament. (Rev. 2:7; 2 Cor. 12:4, and Luke 23:43) God may have wanted a term that did not cover as much area as heaven, something more specific. One thing is certain; God has promised us eternal life in Jesus and with Jesus. We **DO** go directly to **Paradise**, and Jesus is preparing an eternal dwelling place in the Father's house!

## THE FIFTH STATE OF MAN - **TORMENTS**

1. This is the place to which the rich man in Luke 16:22-23 went right after death. It is a place of suffering and bitter laments. It is a place of no returns and no transfers (Luke 16:26-31). A great **GULF** separate **Paradise** and **Torments**. Here the unsaved are kept under punishment (2 Peter 2:9) until the Day of Judgment. Notice they are awaiting judgment, yet currently are under punishment by the Lord. Jesus never called this teaching a parable, but even if it was, a parable has events that can happen and are given as if they are happening. Was there a way for the rich man to change locations?
2. The name of this place may be **TARTARUS** (from the Greek verb used in 2 Peter 2:4, translated "...God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, tartarus,...gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment").
3. Together **Paradise** and **Tartarus** make up **HADES**, the unseen world (which is what HADES means). The New Testament Greek word **HADES** is descriptive of the same place as the Old Testament Hebrew word **SHEOL**, (Acts 2:27; Psalm 16:10); **Hades** is simply the place of all the dead, both good and bad, until the resurrection. It is NOT the same as **HELL**, **THE LAKE OF FIRE**, which is the final eternal place of punishment. Jesus went into **Hades** (Acts 2:27.), but also into **Paradise**: (Luke 23:43). The rich man went into Hades, but the place he went was no Paradise! The word **Hades** occurs 11 times in the New Testament, where it is unfortunately rendered **Hell** in the King James version. It was simply the Greek word for the unseen world of the dead, not necessarily hell. It is found in Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14.
4. At the end of the world, when Christ comes again and the dead are raised, the dead will all come out of **HADES**, to stand before the throne of Christ to be judged (Rev. 20:13-14; Matt. 25:31-34; Acts 10:42).
5. The Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches teach that a place of temporary punishment exists called **PURGATORY**. All who die at peace with the church but are not perfect must undergo a penance and purifying suffering. Only those who have attained a state of Christian perfection are said to go immediately to heaven.

All unbaptized adults and those who after baptism have committed a mortal sin go immediately to hell. Once their sin is purged, then they are transported to heaven. That causes quite a problem since there is not a possibility of perfection except in Christ Jesus as Lord and is therefore a false teaching. **Purgatory** is only mentioned in the Apocryphal book of 2 Maccabees 12:39-45, not in any of the accepted Canonical books of the Bible.

6. Why have a judgment at all if our destiny in the world to come is decided when we die? Because we shall be rewarded according to our **WORKS** (Rev. 22:12; 1 Cor. 3:14); and the effects of our works FOLLOW after us (1 Tim. 5:24-25). All the years of time will be required for the effects of our works to become evident. We can say with great confidence that we do not have a clue what that will be like. God is saving that

information for us as a surprise. Also God's acts and judgments must be vindicated before all men and angels (Rom. 3:4). Also **Hades** - even the **Paradise** part of it - is **NOT** our permanent home. We desire to be "clothed upon" with a new body at the resurrection (2 Cor. 5:4), and dwell in the **New Heaven and New Earth**.

### THE SIXTH STATE OF MAN - **LAKE OF FIRE** (Revelation 20:14-15)

1. Also called **HELL** (Greek, **Gehenna**), "is a place of eternal punishment" (Matt. 25:46). It is called "the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10), and the "second death." Notice that the Scripture points out that it was not created for man. Man chooses to join the devil and his angels.
2. **Hell** is actually the act of a loving God. Separation from God, whatever it is going to be will put an end to rape, incest, murder, stealing, all the things the man created that have destroyed the perfect creation of God and destroyed the world around us and the people we love. It will be the answer to all our prayers that we thought were going unheard when sin is no more on Earth or in Heaven.
3. **Hell** lasts just as long as **Heaven** - forever (Rev. 14:9-11; Mark 9:44-48; Matt 25:46). Hell is not death: it is a punishment worse than death (Heb.10:28-29; Luke 12:4-5). We must say that the imagery is frightening and the reality will be worse. Separation from God and all His holiness will be the worst existence ever created. Hell will exist because of rebellion against his Creator. Man has used his free will to join the devil and his angels in the place were never intended to dwell. Jesus told us, "Do not be afraid of those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in **hell**" (Matt. 10:29).
4. Look at Rev. 20:11-15. What is the significance of **death** and **Hades** being thrown in to the lake of fire along with anyone whose name is not recorded in the book of life? The unseen world of the dead is no more. Even death no longer ends life. Eternity has begun and only the **Lake of Fire** and the **New Heaven and Earth** remain. They are two separate places to exist. One completely without God and one in the presence of God.

### THE SEVENTH STATE OF MAN - **NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH**

1. Revelation 7:9-17. Who is included in the great multitude and how did they get to be there?
2. The saints shall go marching in through the gates into the city of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:14), which will come down out of heaven, apparently to the New Earth, where God's saints shall be with him and serve Him (Rev.21:3-4, 24-27).
3. Revelation 21-22 is a portrait using the most vivid paints imaginable to paint what we cannot yet understand that awaits those who call Jesus their Lord.
4. For a final thought, read 2 Peter 3:3-18