

**QUESTION: Once a person is saved, is he always saved? Can you help me with some of the Scriptures and their meaning concerning salvation: Jude 5, Matthew 24:13, Philippians 2:12, Hebrews 10:26-27, Hebrews 6:4-6? Also, do these Scriptures say that some people will never be saved: II Thessalonians 1:9, Revelation 21:8, Matthew 7:13-14?**

**ANSWER:** Yes, once a person accepts and receives Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, they are saved for all eternity. Where people get confused is on the matter of sanctification, and the place of good works and obedience in a Christian's life. We have several Bible study papers on sanctification, obedience, sowing and reaping, rewards in heaven, and other related topics, so we can't go into all that here, but will just try to answer the questions regarding the specific verses you have mentioned. In short, **once you become a born-again Christian, you ARE saved for eternity** ("once-saved-always-saved"), **but how you build on that foundation** (see I Corinthians 3:10-16), determines **what rewards you will receive in heaven**, the quality of your life here on earth (because sin carries consequences here on earth, even for a Christian), and whether or not God will say to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Let's look at each of these Scripture selections:

- **Jude 5** "But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe."

The whole Epistle of Jude is dealing with the problem of false teachers, false prophets and counterfeit "believers" creeping into the church of God. Please read the whole book in context, and do not take one verse out of context and try to make it fit Christians who might lose their salvation. Also, when this verse uses the word "saved" to refer to the Israelites coming out of Egypt, it means "deliverance" not "saved" as in eternal salvation from hell and going to heaven. **God physically delivered ALL the Israelites out of Egypt, because He was dealing with them as a nation, but as individuals, He "destroyed" all those who did not truly believe in Him.** To give an example, let's say there are ten born-again Christians on an airplane of a hundred passengers, and the plane is having problems and is about to crash. God might "save" or deliver EVERYONE on that airplane in order to protect and deliver the ten Christians, but if the other ninety people don't make a decision for Christ at some time in their lives, they will go to hell when they die. God "saved" them from the airplane going down, just as He "saved" or delivered all the Israelites from Egypt, but only those who truly believed in God were saved from eternal hell and destruction. This applies today to anyone who does not accept Jesus as their Savior - if they reject Him, they will go to hell. This verse does not have anything to do with a true Christian possibly losing their salvation, as that can't happen.

- **Matthew 24:13** "But he who endures to the end shall be saved."

Again, please read the entire chapter and this verse in context. **This chapter is about the Jews who will be living in Israel just before Jesus returns to the earth in His "Glorious Appearing."** Those Jews who remain alive and "endure to the end" will be delivered from the destruction that will come when Jesus comes at the Battle of Armageddon. They will also have an opportunity to believe on Jesus as their Lord and Messiah (see Zechariah 12:10) and be saved in the sense of eternal life in heaven.

- **Philippians 2:12-13** "Therefore my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation

with fear and trembling; for **it is God who WORKS in you both to WILL and to DO for His good pleasure.**"

Yes, **reading verse 12 ONLY might be confusing, but that is not the end of the sentence!** The sentence continues into verse 13, where it says **GOD HIMSELF IS DOING THE WORK IN YOU!** Please note there is a semi-colon at the end of verse 12, not a period, so that means the sentence is continuing until you see a period. Remember, this was originally a letter the Apostle Paul wrote to the believers at Philippi, and the numbered verses were put in many hundreds of years later. Rather than being a verse that causes a person to wonder if they are saved or not, it is actually **a wonderful, COMFORTING verse about how God Himself is at work in each true Christian to carry out His will and good pleasure in our lives.** This idea is also seen in Philippians 1:6, where we are told that **we can be, "CONFIDANT of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."** God began a "good work" in you when you first got saved, and he will continue and complete that work until you stand before Jesus Christ, either after your death, or if you remain until His coming.

Philippians 2:12-13 is often misunderstood. Some cults and religions which teach that you can **WORK YOUR WAY** to heaven use this verse to prove their point. They will tell you that you need to keep the Sabbath, or some other part of the Old Testament Law, or be baptized in **THEIR church only**, or keep certain rules and ordinances. The Bible tells us over and over again that we are saved by **GRACE** through **FAITH**, as a **FREE GIFT** from God, not by the works of the law, or by performing religious ordinances, or by doing good deeds. Philippians 2:12-13 does **NOT** say **WORK FOR** your salvation, but rather to **WORK it OUT**. Once you already **HAVE** the salvation as a free gift from God in Jesus Christ, **your SPIRIT WITHIN YOU is born again**, and that **NEW LIFE in CHRIST** needs to be **DEMONSTRATED** ("worked out") on the **OUTSIDE**, in your daily life where people can **SEE IT**. The good news is that God always gives us the power to do whatever He requires of us. **God gives us the POWER, as HE WORKS in us by His Holy Spirit**, to "WILL" (have the desire) and to "DO" (carry it out) for His good pleasure.

- **Hebrews 10:26-27** "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment."
- **Hebrews 6:4-6** "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put him to an open shame."

It is **SO IMPORTANT** to **read Scripture in its CONTEXT**, so that you understand **TO WHOM** the writer of Hebrews is speaking here. These warnings were being given to Jews who had started to follow Christ, but then went back into Judaism, even **to the point of offering ANIMAL SACRIFICES in the temple!** The warning to these people was that **if they "fell away" from Christ (stopped believing in Jesus)**, the animal sacrifices would no longer cover their sins, as they had in the Old Testament. Jesus was the **FINAL SACRIFICE** for **SINS! If a person rejects JESUS, then there is NO OTHER SACRIFICE that can take away their sins - they can't run back to the Jewish temple and start offering animal sacrifices again, because God won't accept them.** There has been so much misunderstanding and wrong teaching of Hebrews 6:6. The ones to whom "it is impossible to renew them again to repentance" are the ones who have heard the gospel, even seen and felt the working and convicting power of the Holy Spirit (verse 4), but they only "tasted" of the gift of salvation - **they never actually received Christ!** They "tasted" of God's precious gift of salvation, but then "spit it out" by turning their backs on Christ and going back to a religion of "dead works" (Heb. 6:1).

The message is the same in Hebrews chapter 10, and again it is dangerous to take one or two verses out of context. Verse 12 says, "but He (Jesus), **having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time**, sat down at the right hand of God." Verse 18 says, "Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is **no longer any offering for sin**" (meaning the animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant). These people were saying that the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was not sufficient, or didn't count at all, and they were going back to the Old Covenant sacrifices. Verse 27 warns them that only **"a terrifying expectation of judgment" awaits them if they REJECT Christ's sacrifice, because "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" other than Jesus** (verse 26). Hebrews 10:29 says, "Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy WHO has TRAMPLED the SON of GOD UNDERFOOT, counted the blood of the covenant (the BLOOD of JESUS) by which he was sanctified a common (unholy) thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?"

There is that "insulting the Spirit of grace" or blaspheming the Holy Spirit again. It is only those who reject Christ's sacrifice altogether, and count His blood as unholy, who are guilty of that sin. Jesus Himself said, "I say to you, **EVERY SIN and blasphemy WILL BE forgiven** men" (Matt. 12:31), and "If we CONFESS our sins, **He is faithful and just to FORGIVE us our sins**, and to cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). If you believe that Jesus' blood is holy, and that He died for your sins, there is NO SUCH THING as a sin that CANNOT be forgiven you. **The only unforgiveable sin is to REJECT JESUS!!!!**

- **II Thessalonians 1:9** "These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."
- **Matthew 7:13-14** "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"

The question was asked about these Scriptures, "Also, do these Scriptures say that some people will never be saved?" Yes, of course there are many people who will never be saved, because Jesus said, "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" (Matthew 7:13-14). Why is it so "difficult" and so few people find the way to eternal life? Because **Jesus said He is the ONLY WAY** (John 14:2-6), and **MANY people in this world**, especially today, don't like to think there is only one way, and they refuse to humble themselves and admit they are sinners, and they try to find another way to God, but there is no other way.

- **Revelation 21:8** "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

We have some excellent Bible study papers on hell and Judgment Day, and we can't go into all the details here, but will give you a short version. To make it short, **the Bible clearly teaches that ALL who reject Jesus Christ will be thrown into the lake of fire, which is also called HELL**, and this will be their eternal condition (called "the second death" because it comes after a person's physical death). Jesus taught and preached MORE about hell than He did about heaven! Hell is a real place, and **God does NOT want you to go there!** However, it is the place where "those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" will have to spend eternity, "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (II Thessalonians 1:8-9). Jesus tells us in Matthew 25:41 that God originally prepared hell as a place for Satan and the fallen angels, not for mankind: "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into **EVERLASTING FIRE prepared for the devil and his angels**.'" Many people ask the question, "Why does God send anybody to hell?" when the real question we should ask is "Why does God SAVE ANYBODY at all?" **EVERYONE on this EARTH is a SINNER and ALREADY on their way to HELL!** God, in His great love and mercy, has **provided a WAY OF ESCAPE** through faith

in **His Son Jesus Christ!** If anyone rejects or ignores **God's ONLY WAY of ESCAPE from hell**, and if proud, rebellious individuals shake their fists at God, and insist **"I'll do it MY WAY!"** then it is their OWN FAULT that they end up in hell for all eternity - God did not WANT them to go there.

- **II Peter 3:9** "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering (patient) toward us, **NOT willing (wanting) that any should PERISH** but that ALL should come to repentance."
- **I Timothy 2:3-4** "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of **God our Savior, WHO DESIRES ALL MEN to be SAVED** and to come to the KNOWLEDGE of the TRUTH."
- **John 3:36** "He who believes in the SON has ETERNAL LIFE; and he who does NOT BELIEVE the Son shall not see life, but **the WRATH of God** abides (remains) on him."
- **John 3:18** "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but **he who does NOT believe is CONDEMNED ALREADY**, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

The **wrath of God** is God's ANGER against SIN - it is the PUNISHMENT that WE DESERVE for violating God's laws and falling short of His perfect standards. NO ONE EVER keeps (obeys) ALL the commandments ALL of the time, that is why the Bible says we are ALL SINNERS. The penalty for FAILURE TO KEEP the law is DEATH, and the ULTIMATE penalty is ETERNAL DEATH in HELL. **Jesus PAID the penalty FOR US**, so we are NOT CONDEMNED or DAMNED to hell if we BELIEVE and PUT our COMPLETE TRUST in Him.

- **Revelation 20:11-15** "Then 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 (thrown) into the LAKE of FIRE**."
- **Revelation 21:27** "But there shall by no means enter it (heaven) anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only **those who are WRITTEN in the LAMB'S BOOK of LIFE**."

The ones who are thrown into hell are those who are not written in the Book of Life, and whose book is it? Revelation 21:27 calls it **the Lamb's Book of Life**, which means it belongs to Jesus, the Lamb of God. As believers in Jesus Christ, we need have **NO FEAR of the Judgment**, because **Jesus has already PAID for our SINS. Jesus took our sins upon Himself, so that WE will not be punished for them**, and because we believe in Him, our names are written in His book. In Revelation 21:8, don't be confused or worried about the naming of certain sins such as lying, sexual immorality (fornication), murder, idolatry, sorcery, and so forth. The word of God does not say that because someone has committed some of these sins in their lifetime, they can't be saved and will go to hell. It names these people as "murderers", "sorcerers", "liars", and so forth, because **it means these people are this way habitually, and they have NEVER repented and come to Christ. Because they have NEVER come to Jesus Christ, they have NOT had their sins WASHED AWAY in His precious blood**, so they will continue to be "cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and liars" for all eternity in hell, the lake of fire. As believers in Christ, **WE have had our sins washed away in His blood** (Revelation 1:5-6), and **we are MADE NEW in Christ!**