

Read: Isaiah 66:18-24

Heaven and Hell

Isaiah 66:22-24

“As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me,” declares the Lord, “so will your name and descendants endure. From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me,” says the Lord. “And they will go out and look on the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; the worms that eat them will not die, the fire that burns them will not be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Has anyone ever told you they have some good news and they have some bad news? A person will usually follow-up that statement with the question, “Which do you want to hear first?” In this section of our reading Isaiah starts with some good news and finishes with some bad news.

First, the good news. “As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me, so your name and descendants will endure.” This verse tells us that some people, when they die, will live with Jesus forever in heaven. Heaven is a perfect place with no sadness, no pain, and those who live there will joyfully worship and praise God for eternity.

Now, the bad news. “The fire that burns them will not be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.” This verse shows us that some people, when they die, will live forever in hell. Hell is the worst place imaginable and is filled with only pain and suffering that will never end.

When talking about heaven and hell, an important question for us to ask is, “How can we be among those who will go to heaven?” It doesn’t matter what you look like, how good you are, or where you live. The answer to this question lies in the heart of every person. Those who have been given the gift of faith and believe Jesus died and rose from the dead to save them from their sins will live with him forever in heaven. Those who refuse to believe in Jesus as their Savior will spend eternity in hell. That is a hard truth for us to hear, but it is an important fact for us to know.

As believers in Jesus, we look forward to the day we will live with Jesus forever in heaven. Until that day we strive to be faithful in studying God’s Word so our faith can be strengthened. We also want to tell others about Jesus so that they may believe and live with us in heaven one day.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- What did Jesus do to save you from your sins?
- Where will you live with Jesus forever one day?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Why will some people go to heaven and other people go to hell?
- What are you most looking forward to in heaven?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Why do you think people find it easier to talk about heaven than hell? Why is it important to talk about both?
- Mark 16:16 says, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." Think of a friend, neighbor, or family member who is not a Christian and make a plan to tell them about Jesus.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for the gift of faith so that we may live with you forever in heaven. Help us to be students of your Word our whole lives and to tell others the good news that you died on the cross to save them from their sins. Amen.