



"God's Invitation"

Your Reservation

Resource to NT Journey 1: Salvation

THE BIG QUESTION

Let us consider the fact that life is a journey that takes us through several stages:

- 1. conception and growth in the womb
- 2. birth
- 3. growing and maturing
- 4. old age and degeneration
- 5. death and the hereafter

Without knowing our eternal destination, people often feel purposeless, afraid of death, unforgiven, and lost. But knowing where we are going for eternity gives a secure foundation to build a great life on earth.

Is there life after life? Do you know where you are going?

DISCUSSION TIME

If you were to die today, do you know for sure, without a doubt, that you would go to Heaven for eternity?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If you stood before the Almighty God and He said to you, "Why should I allow you into heaven," how would you respond? _____

If you answered "no" or "unsure," then here is an important question: Is your eternity something you want to leave to chance? Hopefully, it is not.

The good news is that you do not have to risk eternity! You can follow God's roadmap to eternal joy forever, guaranteed! You can make a reservation in Heaven and have peace knowing you have His forgiveness!

TWO TREES IN THE BIBLE



Understanding two Bible trees and how we can have confirmed reservations in Heaven.

It is essential to understand the meaning of two trees described in the Bible. They provide a framework to help us understand God's plan for knowing where we are going after we die.

TREE #1: THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL

The Bible says that when God created the first human beings, Adam and Eve, He placed them in a paradise called the Garden of Eden. There was no sickness, no pain, no sorrow, no death, no fighting, no war. There was a perfect fellowship with God and each other. God had created a paradise where we all long to live. It was Heaven on earth!

When God created Adam and Eve, He created them “in his own image” (Genesis 1:27). What does that mean? Do human beings look like God? Are we as smart, as powerful, or as wise as God? No, of course not.

Being in the image of God means that like God, human beings have:

1. **Intellect**, far superior to any animal or other part of creation.
2. **Emotions**, far more complicated than animals.
3. **Will or volition**, which is the ability to choose, to decide, to make complex moral judgments, and to act on them.

Why did God create people in His image? One reason is that He wanted a love relationship with us. God wanted to love us and to be loved by us. He wanted us to choose to love Him and be with Him. Genesis 3:8 says, “They heard Yahweh God’s voice walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh God among the trees of the garden.” Choosing to love God requires a decision of the will and a choice to either accept or reject Him.

To provide a concrete opportunity for this choice, God created a tree called “The tree of the knowledge of good and evil” and said,

“You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**, you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” (Genesis 2:16-17 ESV)

To “die” in this verse does not mean physical death, but the death of a relationship. If Adam and Eve rejected God’s leadership and fellowship, their love relationship with God would be severed. That rejection is precisely what they did; they disobeyed and thereby, sinned.

The greatest tragedy is that sin brought eternal “death”—which is separation from God. “For the wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23a WEB)

This account is also sad because, as a result of this first sin, evil came into the world, and paradise was lost. When Adam and Eve removed themselves from God’s fellowship in the Garden of Eden, they ushered in a world of sin and suffering. This tragedy is often referred to as “the fall.”

God placed an angel to guard the entrance to the Garden so Adam and Eve could not return and perhaps eat from the “tree of life” and live forever in their cursed state separated from God.

“Therefore, Yahweh God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. So, he drove out the man; and he placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.” (Genesis 3:23–24 WEB)

Since that time, all human beings have suffered the terrible effects of sin in a fallen world

- We lie
- We steal
- We lust
- We take God's name in vain
- And so on

We are all sinners: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23 WEB)

The Bible reveals that our sins separate us from our holy God and prevent us from entering the paradise of Heaven. Why? Because Heaven is a perfect place and there must be nothing impure in it. Any sin would corrupt and ruin the heavenly paradise.

SUMMARY

The story of this first tree, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil:

- God created Heaven on earth
- God created human beings with the ability to decide
- Human beings chose and kept choosing to sin
- We, therefore, live in a fallen, sinful, painful, and evil world
- Sin separates us from God for eternity

DISCUSSION TIME

Have you ever sinned (done anything wrong)?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Do you feel guilty for the wrongs you have done?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Would you like to have your guilt removed and honor restored?

- Yes
- No

What is the answer to these problems and our separation from God and Heaven? It is the second tree!

TREE #2: THE TREE OF CALVARY

God is deeply saddened when we, just like Adam and Eve, disobey, sin, and reject Him.

"Yahweh [the Lord God] saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Yahweh was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him in his heart." (Genesis 6:5-6 WEB)

What could God do? He could undoubtedly forgive; however, His justice demanded payment for wrongdoing. Someone had to pay the price for sin. Thankfully, God could also provide the payment for all sin.

Almighty God is the just Judge of the Universe. He must pronounce every human being guilty of their wrongdoings. But as a loving Heavenly Father, God is also willing to pay the price of our sins. He did this through God the Son, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins on the Tree of Calvary.

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.

"Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree." (Galatians 3:13b WEB)

What is this Tree of Calvary? The tree described in the above verse; is the cross on which God the Son (Jesus Christ) died for our sins. It is the cross on Mount Calvary.



As sinners, we are not only deserving of the penalty of death; we are also deserving of the shame of our sins. But when Jesus (God the Son) died on the cross, he bore both. He bore:

1. The judicial payment for our sins.
2. The personal shame of our sins.

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord." (Romans 6:23 ESV)

God the Son (Jesus Christ) provided the solution for sin, suffering, and eternal death by dying on the cross and rising to life again. He is eager to save those who will receive Him as Savior from their sins and make Him the Lord of their lives.

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit." (1 Peter 3:18 ESV)

To receive eternal life, each person must personally choose to receive this gift of forgiveness and salvation. Would you like to receive this now? If so, here is a prayer you can pray to receive God's gift of salvation:

Lord Jesus, thank you for dying for my sins and rising from the dead to overcome sin and death. I receive your gift of salvation. Come into my life, help me to live for you and know that I am yours.

In Jesus name,
Amen.

The most crucial difference between all other religions and Christianity is that all others are "DO," but Christianity is "DONE." Other religions insist that people must DO various acts of service to earn an eternal reward. However, the Bible says that we cannot serve God to earn salvation. Instead, we serve Him because of what Jesus Christ has already DONE to save us.

SUMMARY

The story of the second tree, the Tree of Calvary:

- God is saddened by sin, evil, pain, and suffering
- God's justice demanded payment for wrongdoing
- God's love provided the payment: God the Son, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for our sins and rose again
- This solution is available to all who receive it, by faith



DISCUSSION TIME

Have you prayed a prayer such as the one above, to receive the gift of eternal life?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If no or unsure, would you like to do so right now?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes, please pray the prayer above and receive God's gift of salvation!

If you prayed this prayer, what does that mean for your future? _____

Romans 10:13b says, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Based on this verse, is God's gift of salvation available to you?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION AND YOUR RESERVATION

How do I know I just received the gift of salvation and eternal life?

1 John 5:13 says, "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life." Based on this verse, is it possible to know that you have eternal life?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Titus 3:4-5 says, "But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit." (NLT)

Based on this verse, are we saved by the good things that we do?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

How does Titus 3:4-5 say that we are saved? _____

If you have prayed to receive God's gift of eternal salvation today, CONGRATULATIONS!

You have begun a fantastic journey that will one day end in Heaven, your eternal home. You are now journeying with Jesus. He wants to take you to places of great wonder, excitement, and joy. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV)

The more you understand your new life, the more you will understand who you are and your purpose in living. To help you in this new life and walk, we have created a series of lessons called "Discipleship Journeys with Jesus." Perhaps you have studied this lesson after a referral from Journey 1. However, if you are reading this resource and have not yet started the DJJ lessons, please sign up for our free discipleship lessons. They are available online at djministry.org and begin with the blue "Start your journey" box on the home page.

God bless you!

